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AN

EXPOSITION

WITH

Practical Observations

CONTINUED UPON

The Thirty Second, the Thirty Third, and the Thirty Fourth Chapters of the Book of

JOB:

BEING

The Substance of Forty-nine Lectures, delivered at *Magnus* Near the Bridge, LONDON.

By JOSEPH CARYL, *Preacher of the Gospel, and Pastour of the Congregation there.*

Prov. 18. 17.

He that is first in his own cause, seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.

LONDON,

Printed by *M. Simmons*, for *Giles Widdowes* and are to be sold at his Shop at the *Maiden-head* over against the *Half-Moon* in *Alderſgate-ſtreet* near *Jewen-ſtreet*, 1669.

TO THE CHRSTIAN READER.

TO Thoſe eſpecially of this CITIE, who yet continue helpfull towards this WORKE.

SIRS;

YE *have had (according to my poore meaſure) the whole diſputation between* Job *and his three friends,* Eliphaz, Bildad *and* Zophar, *explicated in* nine parts *already publiſhed; I now (through the bleſſing and good hand of God with me) preſent you with the* Tenth; *which indeed, without any deſigne or pre-intent of mine, proves like the* Tenth wave *from the vaſt ocean of this holy Booke, ſomewhat bigger, and fuller, I cannot ſay (and 'tis my reproofe having been ſo long converſant in this booke that I cannot ſay) ſtronger and better,* i.e. *more ſpirituall (which alone is the ſtrength of Scripture writings) then the former; but ſuch as it is (& that it is ſuch as it is, I own*

and humbly acknowledge the goodnes of God in using me to doe it, such as it is (I say) I freely tender it to your favourable acceptance, & dedicate it to the glory of God & the common good: knowing that it is both my duty and Interest to shew the small improvement though but of one single talent, rather then, either through sloath or slavish modesty to hide it in a Napkin.

In the prefatory Epistle to the second part of this book, there was an endeavour of a discovery concerning the distinct opinion of Jobs *three friends, as also of what himselfe held fast and insisted upon all along in distinction from theirs. And now that I have done with all that was said on both sides by the disputants, and am come to open the discourse of* Elihu, *who appeared as* Moderator *to give a determination about the Great Question, so long ventitated among them; it may seeme somewhat necessary, and I am much perswaded, if in any competency attained) it will not be unprofitable, to give the* Reader *a briefe prospect of what* Elihu *aymeth at and doth in this his large and accurate discourse, continued in sixe Chapters throughout and divided into (besides his Generall preface which takes up the whole thirty second Chapter) foure remarkeable sections.*

Elihu

Elihu *is introduced by the pen-man of this booke in a great passion, both with* Job *and his three friends, and he gives us an account why he was in such a heate of passion with both* (chap: 32. 2, 3.) Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu; against Job was his wrath kindled, because he had justified himselfe rather then God. Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.

It remaines therefore, that Elihu *was the man, who found an answer in this great difficulty and yet condemned not* Job. *And indeed he condemned him not (as his friends had done) as a man imperfect & crooked in his wayes, as a man that feared not God & eschewed not evill, In or for these things* Elihu *did not condemne* Job, *though his wrath was kindled against him: he condemned him only for this, because he complained so much of the severity of Gods dealings with him, and so, by consequence* justified himselfe rather then God. *And in that poynt or for that fault he spared him not, but reproved him as sharply and condemned him as deeply as his friends had done upon other and those (most of them) undue and insufficient grounds. Thus we read his censure of him* (chap: 34. 35. Job hath spoken without knowledge, and his words were without wisdome. *And againe* (chap: 35. 16.)

There-

Therefore Job openeth his mouth in vaine, he multiplyeth *words* without knowledge; *that is, without a cleare knowledge of himselfe both as a creature and as a sinner, as also of the desigue and purpose of God in afflicting him.*

Now, besides those passages in the discourse of Elihu *wherein he chargeth* Jobs *three friends with folly for condemning* Job *when they could not answer him, & those wherein he reproves* Jobs *ignorance or want of knowledge, for wondring how such great evills should fall upon him, notwithstanding his integrity, likewise his boldnes or peremptorines in his own cause, justifying himselfe rather then God, yea and desiring to plead his cause before him; I say besides these passages, we at first reading might conclude that* Elihu *did nothing else throughout these six chapters, but enlarge or paraphrase upon those things, which had long before been spoken to by* Eliphaz, Bildad, *and* Zophar, *and by* Job *himselfe as much as by any of, if not beyond all them three.*

But upon further consideration of the matter in the whole series and contexture of his discourse, we may collect two things, instanced in and insisted on by Elihu *alone, upon which his particular opinion and sentence is grounded in distinction from all the rest. The cleare understanding of which, will lead*

us to a faire solution or removall of those doubts which arise about the question or matter in debate.

The two distinct poynts produced by Elihu, *are, First, about Revelation, or how God is pleased to manifest his mind and will to man. Secondly, about Mediation, or the meanes which God hath graciously afforded man to heale those breaches, which sin hath made between God and him, and so either firstly, or afresh to reconcile man againe to himselfe.*

The Former of these is handled (chap: 33. v. 14, 15, 16, 17.) For God speaketh once, yea twice, though man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deepe sleepe falleth upon men: Then he openeth the eares of men, and sealeth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man. *And thus, as it is said in the verse following,* He keepeth back his soule from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword; *that is, these speakings of God are by the saving power and Spirit of God made effectuall for his salvation both temporall and eternal.*

The latter is handled in the same chapter, beginning at the 23^{d} *verse to the end of the* 30th. If there be a messenger (or Angel) with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightnes: then he is gracious unto him, and

saith, Deliver him from going downe to the pit, I have found a ransome. His flesh shall be fresher then a childs, he shall returne to the dayes of his youth. He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable to him, and he shall see his face with joy, &c.

Hence the opinion or determination of Elihu *may be thus conceived.*

That, notwithstanding all the confusions and disorders which seeme to be in the affaires of this world, the providence of God over mankinde in Generall, and his great mercy towards the righteous in speciall, is seene most eminently in these two things.

First, In that he inspires them with the knowledge of heavenly things, or acquaints them some way or other with his mind, both as to the meaning of what he doth to them, and of what he would have them doe.

Secondly, In that he provideth and sends them a messenger or mediatour both to instruct them in their duty, & to pray for mercy, and so consequently to deliver them, when their soule draweth neere to the Grave, and their life to the destroyers.

Both these gracious dispensations of God are proper to righteous men, or at least appropriate to them in a peculiar manner; the righteous are the men

men for whom God provides a messenger or mediatour; and the righteous are the men whom God savingly and effectually inspires with the knowledge of his will, in the things which concerne both their present worke and future reward. Neither hath Satan any power so to darken their understandings about those great things as to make them miscarry; and as for all his other mischievous plots and practices against them, they serve to a cleane contrary purpose then he intendeth, according to that most comfortable assertion of the Apostle (Rom: 8. 28.) We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Satan provoked God for a licence to heape outward calamities upon Job *in stripping him naked of his worldly substance, and in tormenting his body with grievous paines and sickness; which latter* Elihu *prosecutes at large* (chap: 33.19,20,21, 22.) He is chastned also with paine upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong paine; so that his life abhorreth bread, &c. *And what he speakes of sickness is applicable to any or all sorts of affliction; in all which (as it is sayd,* v. 27,28,29,30.) God looketh upon men, and if any say I have sinned and perverted that which is right, and it profiteth me not; he will deliver his

soule from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light. Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, to bring back his soule from the pit, to be enlightned with the light of the living.

From these premises we may collect both what is proper to the righteous; and that, in whatsoever is common to them with the wicked, there is neither disorder nor confusion. For though the best of the righteous are lyable to the same outward evills which the worst of the wicked are, yet their condition is not the same; seeing to the wicked those evills are purely punishments, & but the beginning of those sorrows which shall never end; whereas to the righteous they are either but chastisements for some sin already committed, or medicaments to prevent the committing either of the same, or of some other sin. And as for those who by such chastnings are brought to a sight of their sins and forsake them, their soules are (*by this meanes*, v. 30.) brought back from the pit to be enlightned with the light of the living.

This poynt is yet more fully and plainly prosecuted by Elihu *in the* 36th *chapter; where he informeth us, how sufferings are differently to be conceived of according to a threefold difference of the persons suffering. The first, and chiefe, is of those, who are truely righteous and keep close to God in righteous wayes. The second is of those who being righteous in their state have fallen foulely in their way, with whom we may also reckon such as are yet in an unrighteous state, yet shall be and at last are converted and brought home to God. The third is of those who persevere and obstinately continue in their wicked state and wayes, stopping their eares, and hardning their hearts, both against instruction and correction.*

Elihu *seemeth to put all these together* (v.5,6.) Behold God is mighty and despiseth not any, he is mighty in strength and wisdome, he preserveth not the life of the wicked, but giveth right to the poore. *More distinctly,*

He speaks of the first (v.7.) He (*that is, God*) with-draweth not his eyes from the righteous: but with kings are they on the throne, yea, he doth establish them for ever, and they are exalted.

He speakes of the second sort v.8,9,10,11. And if they be bound in fetters and holden in the cords of affliction, then he sheweth them their worke and their iniquity, that they have exceeded. He openeth also their eare to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity, &c.

He speakes of the third sort (v. 13, 14.) But the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath; they cry not when he bindeth them; they dye in youth, and their life is among the uncleane.

These three sorts of men are dealt with by God according to their kind. The last of them being altogether wicked and incorrigible, abide under wrath for ever.

The second being in an evill state or having done that which is evill, yet humbling themselves (through grace) and being bettered by their afflictions. are usually restored to a prosperous estate in this life, & in case they dy under affliction, are alwayes crowned with the blessedness of eternal life.

The First sort, walking constantly (humane frailties excepted) in their uprightnesse, are not only preserved in peace, but receive high favours and speciall markes of honour from the bountifull hand of God; which is true, especially according to the condition of those times, wherein God did more engage himselfe to his faithfull servants in promises of temporall happiness, then now he doth in Gospel times.

And yet even these, as now they are not, so then they were not alwayes exempted from sufferings; For as the second sort of righteous men are often afflicted in a way of chastisement for their sins; so

so the Lord reserves to himselfe a liberty (his Soveraignty allowing it) to afflict the best and holiest of his servants for the tryall of their graces, or the magnifying of his owne grace to them and in them; as a Master of Heroick Arts and Games *imposeth a very laborious task upon his* Schollar-Champion, *not as a punishment of any default, but to confirme his strength and exercise his valour.*

The due consideration of all these things layd together by Elihu, *might well satisfie* Job, *and sustaine his faith in a patient bearing the burden of all those calamities, which the Great and most wise God was pleased to impose upon him, and likewise convince him that he had fayled much in giving out so many impatient complaints about them. And no doubt they prevailed much with him, both towards his conviction, and the quieting of his heart under those dispensations; For we heare no more of him in that language.*

Yet Elihu *thought he had not done enough, but continueth his discourse, and draweth a further demonstration for his purpose, from the wonderfull workes of God in nature, from the raine, thunder, snow, windes, &c. which he doth from the 27th verse of the 36th Chapter, to the end of the 37th, and with that concludes his answer.*

The

The scope of Elihu *in that long and learned Philosophicall Lecture was to teach and assure* Job, *that, God who causeth and disposeth those various alterations and terrible impressions in the ayre, both for the humbling and benefiting of man, doth much more both send and over-rule all those changes & afflictions which befall the sons of men, here on earth, to humble them & do them good. And further to assure him, that if man be not able to give a satisfying reason of those workes of God in nature, but is often gravel'd and forced to sit downe in a silent admiration; then surely man is much lesse able to fathome the depth of Gods purposes in all the workes of his providence, but must in many of them only sit downe quietly and submit; For (as* Elihu *concludeth from these premises (*Chap: 37. 23,24.) Touching the Almighty we cannot find him out, he is Excellent in power and in Judgement, and in plenty of Justice he will not afflict, (*either causelesly or more then needs, though we seldome see the causes or acknowledge the need of his afflictions*) men doe (*that is, they ought*) therefore feare him; *and if any are so proud and high in their owne thoughts that they doe not, at their perill be it, for*) he respecteth not any that are wise in heart; *that is, as the carnal wisdome of worldly men cannot be a barre, so*

so the true wisdome of godly men is no priviledge against the Soveraigne power of God in afflicting them. And therefore Job, *though truely wise in heart, must not looke for any such respect from God as to be untoucht by or priviledg'd from affliction.*

For the close of all, we may summe up the whole scope of Elihu's *under-taking with* Job, *yea of the whole Booke of* Job *in these six poynts or propositions.*

First, No man can stand before God in his owne personall righteousnes.

Secondly, How righteous soever any person is, yet the Lord may afflict and breake him in what way and in what degree himselfe thinkes fit.

Thirdly, God hath most wise and gracious aymes in afflicting his righteous servants.

Fourthly, His most righteous servants may not take the liberty to complaine as if they were wrong'd, or as if God were either rigorous or unrighteous in the least, how much or how long soever they are afflicted.

Fifthly, There is nothing gotten by complaining or striving under the afflicting hand of God; and therefore

Sixthly, 'Tis best for us or our wisest way when

when things are at worst with us to give glory to God both as just and good, and (possessing our soules with patience) by faith to waite in hope, till he giveth us a fresh experience of his goodnesse, eyther by sweetning our troubles to us, and supporting us under them, or by bringing us out of them (as he did Job) in the fittest season.

If in perusing this discourse of Elihu *we carry these generall results in our eye, we shall read both the Text and Comment with more clearenesse in our understandings at all times, and with more profit (when at any time under them) in our chastenings, which, that we all may is the prayer of*

Your affectionate Servant

The 24th of the 3d Moneth 1661.

in this worke of Christ

JOSEPH CARYL.

AN EXPOSITION WITH Practicall Observations UPON The Thirty-second, Thirty-third, and Thirty-fourth Chapters of the Book of JOB.

JOB, Chap. 32. Vers. 1, 2, 3.

So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes.

Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite of the kindred of Ram: against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himselfe rather then God.

Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled: because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.

THe last Chapter ended with these words, *The words of Job are ended*; the beginning of this tells us, his three friends had ended theirs. *So these three men ceased to answer Job*; Thus we have had the whole dispute between *Job* and his three friends; Now followeth the determination of it. The disputants having done, the moderators begin; First *Elihu*, and after him God himselfe.

Elihu ſpends ſix whole Chapters in delivering his mind upon this Controverſie; yet he makes ſome pauſes and overtures, moving or inviting *Job* to a reply. But *Job* interpoſed not a word.

We may conſider this whole diſcourſe of *Elihu* in foure diſtinct parts; the firſt contained in the 32d and 33d Chapters; the ſecond in the 34th, the third in the 35th, and the fourth in the 36th and 37th Chapters of this Book.

In the firſt part, he directeth his ſpeech; firſt to *Jobs* three friends, in this 32d Chapter; Secondly, to *Job* himſelfe in the 33d.

In this Chapter we may conſider, firſt a rationall tranſition from the diſpute between *Job* and his friends, to this diſcourſe of *Elihu*, in the five firſt verſes; Secondly, we have a very Rhetoricall or patheticall Preface, wherein *Elihu* endeavoureth to gaine attention by giving an account, or the reaſons of his undertaking, in which he interweaves many Apologies for himſelfe, in venturing upon ſo hard a taske, reſpecting both his youth, and the weight of the argument. He amplifies and continueth upon this ſubject to the end of the 32d Chapter; wherein he engageth himſelfe by ſolemne promiſe to carry on the buſineſſe without reſpect of perſons, without feare or flattery.

Yet more diſtinctly in this firſt part, The tranſition; firſt, a reaſon is aſſigned why *Jobs* friends left off ſpeaking. *As it is not good to begin to ſpeak, ſo neither to give over ſpeaking, till we ſee and can give a reaſon for it*; The reaſon here given, is, becauſe *Job was righteous in his own eyes* (v. 1.) Secondly, a reaſon is given not only why *Elihu* did begin to ſpeak, but why he began to ſpeak as he did, *in anger*; firſt, againſt *Job*, which is laid downe in the ſecond verſe, *Becauſe he juſtified himſelfe rather then God*; Secondly, againſt his friends (*ver.* 3.) *Becauſe they had found no anſwer, yet had condemned Job*, or, *becauſe they cenſured him, though they could not confute him.* In the 4th and 5th verſes, we have a diſcovery of the cauſe of *Elihu's* modeſty in forbearing ſo long to ſpeak, which he further inlargeth in the following parts of the Chapter.

Verſ. 1. *So theſe three men ceaſed to anſwer Job.*

They who had maintained the diſpute all this while, *ceaſed*, reſted, or ſate downe. When men ſpeak they uſually ſtand up or

or ſtand forth. The word in the Hebrew may be rendred thus; *They ſabbatized*, implying they had found it a week of hard work, and ſtrong labour in dealing and tugging with *Job*; And now as if their *ſeventh day* or *Saboth* were come, they ſate downe and took their reſt. Speaking, eſpecially arguing and diſputing with a knowing and reſolved adverſary, is tough worke; And they who have been at it to purpoſe, may for very wearineſſe have cauſee enough to reſt or take their Saboth; ſo did theſe three men, they ceaſed or ſabbatiz'd from anſwering *Job*.

Verbum ipſum שבת *indicat contentionem & defatigationem diſputationis præteritæ & ingentem vim poſitam in repugnando & refutando.*

We may yet further enquire, why did they ceaſe? Firſt, ſome men ceaſe to anſwer, becauſe they have no more to anſwer. Secondly, others ceaſe to anſwer, becauſe they ſuppoſe they have anſwered enough already, and will anſwer no more. Some ſay the former was the reaſon why *Jobs* three friends ceaſed to anſwer, they had no more to anſwer; Others take the latter, that they had no mind, no will to give any further anſwer. But the reaſon expreſſed in the text (which ſhould ſatisfie us and ſuperſeed further queries) is, Pined;

Becauſe he was righteous in his owne eyes.

As if it had been ſaid, *Becauſe they ſaw they had done no good upon him, Job kept his ground and maintained his ſtanding, he diſputed every inch with them, and yeilded not an inch; as they found him at firſt, ſo he was at laſt, they ſaw him a man immoveably ſet downe in his owne purpoſe and opinion, and therefore, becauſe they could get nothing by ſpeaking, they would ſpeak no more. 'Tis but loſt labour,* (as we ſay) *to waſh the Blackmore.* The conſtancy and warmth of *Job* in defending himſelfe they judged obſtinacy and a humour to oppoſe, or but the ſwelling of a proud ſpirit; whereas indeed it was the love of truth, not of contention, a zeale to doe himſelfe right, not to doe them wrong, which cauſed him ſtill to hold up the Bucklers, and adhere ſo ſtiffely to his owne opinion. Thus deſpayring to convince or bring him to an acknowledgement, that he was unrighteous, *they ceaſed.*

Becauſe he was righteous in his owne eyes.

That's ſuch another forme of ſpeaking (*Pro.* 3. 7.) *Be not wiſe in thine owne eyes*; As alſo that (*Pro.* 26. 12.) *Seeſt thou a man wiſe in his owne conceit, there is more hope of a fool then of him.*

You may easier reduce a man that is indeed ignorant, then him that thinks himselfe very wise, or knowing, but is not. This was the apprehension of *Jobs* friends concerning him, *He was a man* (thought they and so they said) *righteous in his owne eyes.*

There are three sorts of righteous persons. First, such as are righteous in the eyes of God, and so the Godly are under a twofold notion; First, as being pardoned for or justified from their unrighteousnesse, through faith in Christ; Blessed are they who are thus accounted righteous in the eyes of God. Secondly, they are righteous, as avoyding unrighteous, and doing righteous things. There is a seed, a principle of righteousnesse in persons justified and regenerated, which dayly puts it selfe forth in righteous actings; *He that doth righteousnesse is righteous* (1 Joh: 3. 7.) He is so, both as to his state, and as to his actions, in the eyes of God and good men.

Secondly, Many are righteous in the eyes of men, they have faire appearances and out-sides; you can read nothing amisse in their conversation, yet they are unrighteous, yea altogether unrighteous in the eyes of God, yea and possibly in their owne too; They cannot but see their own wickednesse, though they can conceale it from the sight of others. Hypocrites are like painted Sepulchers, faire without (as Christ spake of the Pharisees) but within full of rottennesse. They seeme that to men which God seeth they are not; They can shew their best side to and hide their worst from men, but they cannot play this game with God; he seeth their best is bad, because it is but the covering, not the hating, not the mortifying of that which is bad.

Thirdly, There is another sort who are righteous in their own eyes; such *Solomon* describes (*Prov.* 30. 12.) *There is a generation that are pure in their owne eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthinesse.* These have a great opinion of themselves; They think all is right and well with them, when indeed they are filthy and uncleane, their hearts being yet unchanged, though their wayes are smoothed; and though they may have left off to doe many filthy things, yet they are not washed from their filthinesse. The text in hand puts *Job* into this third sort of righteous men. But was it thus with him? I answer; First, *Job* was a man righteous in the eyes of God, in both the notions mentioned; he was righteous as justified and righteous as sanctified. Secondly, *Job*

Job was a man righteous in the eyes of many men; for he saith (*Chap.* 29. 11.) *The ear which heard me blessed me, and the eye which saw me gave witnesse to me*; yet *Job* had not an universall testimony given by men; There were some, I cannot say many, in whose eyes he was unrighteous; He was so in the eyes and opinion of his friends especially. Though none could, as to the eye, tax *Job* with any unrighteousnesse, no not they who doubtlesse had sifted his life to the bran, yet his friends thought him unrighteous, and he stood judg'd as unrighteous in their eye.

As for the third sort of righteousnesse, that of being righteous in our owne eyes we must distinguish; *Job* was indeed righteous in his owne eyes in a good sence, and that under a twofold consideration; First, as not having committed any gross or scandalous act of wickednesse, as he professed at large and with much confidence in that apologie and vindication which he made for himselfe in the Chapter foregoing; where he calls downe the severest judgements of God upon himselfe, if he had done such things as he was suspected of, especially if he had defiled himselfe with those common polutions of the world, wantonnesse, injustice and oppression. *Job* stood upon it that he was thus righteous. Secondly, *Job* was righteous in his owne eyes, as to the allowing of himselfe in any the least sin or unevenesse, either of heart or life; Thus much his protestation or imprecation amounts to in the 33d verse of that Chapter; *If I have covered my transgressions as Adam, by hiding mine iniquity in my bosome*; As if he had said, I have not lived in the love of any sin whatsoever. Thus *Job* was righteous in his owne eyes, protesting to God and before men, that as he was not scandalously wicked in any kinde, so he was not closely nor hypocritically wicked; every sin was his burden, and the abhorrence of his soule. In any other sence *Job* was far from being righteous in his owne eyes; He never either said or thought he had done no evill, or was altogether sin-lesse, like white paper without blot or blur; yea we very often find him confessing his sins and failings (*Chap.* 7. 20.) *I have sinned; what shall I doe unto thee thou preserver of men?* He maketh a like acknowledgement (*Chap.* 9. 2.) *I know it is so of a truth, but how shall man be just with God? If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand.* Againe (*ver.* 20.) *If I justifie my selfe, my mouth shall condemne me: If I say I am perfect,* it

it ſhall alſo prove me perverſe. And while he affirmes the generall viciouſneſſe of nature, he muſt needs imply his owne (*Chap.* 15. 14.) *What is man that he ſhould be cleane? and he which is borne of a woman, that he ſhould be righteous? Behold he putteth no truſt in his Saints, yea the heavens are not cleane in his ſight, how much more abominable and filthy is man?* In this univerſall concluſion, he includeth himſelfe, therefore *Job* was far from being righteous in his owne eyes in any proud opinion of his owne righteouſneſſe or freedome from any ſtaine of ſin. So much for the opening of thoſe words, containing the reaſon why his friends ceaſed to anſwer; *Becauſe he was righteous in his owne eyes.*

It was the deſigne of theſe three men not only to convince *Job* that he was a ſinner, but to bring him upon his knees as a notorious ſinner; And yet all their allegations and argumens could not bring him to it; *My righteouſneſſe* (ſaid he, *Chapt.* 27. 6.) *I hold faſt, I will not let it goe.* Now, when they ſaw him thus reſolved and ſtiffe in maintaining the goodneſſe of his cauſe, and the integrity of his ſpirit, they quitted the buſineſſe, or as the text ſaith, *ceaſed to anſwer.*

Hence note;

We ceaſe to doe when we cannot attaine our end in doing.

Impoſſibilium nullus eſt conatus.

When we ſee it is in vaine to perſwade, we give over perſwading, Deſpayre of working our end, puts an end to our working. Induſtry is at a ſtand, yea withdraweth when impoſſibilities appeare. And though nothing be impoſſible unto God, yet we find God himſelfe giving over both ſpeaking and ſmiting when he ſeeth he is like to doe no good by eyther. Thus he expreſſeth his purpoſe (*Iſa.* 1. 5.) when he had ſpent many rods of ſore Judgements & afflictions upon that people, when he had ſtricken them till, from the crowne of the head, to the ſole of the feete, they were nothing but a continued wound, and yet they received not correction; he preſently reaſons thus, *Why ſhould ye be ſtricken any more, ye will revolt more and more.* As if he had ſaid, *The end why I ſmote you was to amend you, to bring you home to my ſelfe, to cauſe you to turne back, or returne from your evill wayes, but I ſee I have loſt my labour, and ſpent not only my rods but my ſcorpions in vaine upon you, therefore I will ceaſe from this kind of work, why ſhould ye be ſtricken any more, ye will revolt more and more.*

And

And when God hath ſpoken long to a people who regard it not, he ceaſeth to ſpeak any more, but ſaith, Why ſhould ye be taught any more? Let the Prophets tongue cleave to the roof of his mouth, let him be dumb and ſilent, as the word is (*Ezek.* 3. 26.) *Thou ſhalt be dumb, and ſhalt not be a reprover* (why) *for they are a rebellious houſe.* After all thy ſpeaking, they continue rebelling, therefore ſpeak no more. We read the like dreadfull prohibition (*Hoſ.* 4. 4.) *Let no man ſtrive nor reprove another* (let all wayes of reclaiming this people be laid aſide) *For thy people are as they that ſtrive with the Prieſt*; That is, they are obdurate and deſperately ingaged in wickedneſſe (*Hoſ.* 4. 17.) *Ephraim is joyned to Idols* (he cleaveth and ſticketh faſt to them, he will not be pulled from his owne inventions) *Let him alone.* Thus God ſaith to his Prophets and Miniſters, *ceaſe*, he ſaith to his Ordinances, *ceaſe*, when ſinners will not ceaſe to ſin and doe wickedly againſt the Lord. The ſame unprofitable and incorrigible people are threatned in the ſame manner by another Prophet (*Amos* 8. 9.) *It ſhall come to paſſe in that day, ſaith the Lord God, that I will cauſe the Sun to goe downe at noone.* And (*ver.* 11.) *I will ſend a famine in the Land, not a famine of bread, but of hearing the words of the Lord.* God would ſtop the raining down of heavenly Manna, and the people ſhould not heare, becauſe they would not. Such was the ſentence of Chriſt againſt the *Jewes* (Math. 23. 37.) *O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, thou that killeſt the Prophets, and ſtoneſt them which are ſent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not?* What follows this refuſall? read and tremble (*ver.* 38.) *Behold your houſe is left unto you deſolate, for I ſay unto you, ye ſhall not ſee me henceforth*, &c. As if he had ſaid, becauſe ye have been ſo unteachable, therefore ye ſhall be taught no more. It is ſad, when we give God occaſion to give over either ſpeaking to us or afflicting us. God will not alwayes ſtrive with the unwillingneſſe, much leſſe with the wilfulneſſe of man; nor will men be alwayes doing that to men, which they ſee doth them no good. *So theſe three men ceaſed*, &c.

Secondly, Note hence;

When men are obſtinate and will not be reclaimed, it is good to give over.

Why ſhould they who in any kind are abſolutely reſolved, be further

further moved? (*Acts* 21. 14.) *When Pauls friends saw he would not be perswaded, they ceased*: they had used much perswasion to keepe him from going up to *Jerusalem*, because of the sufferings that were prophesied should befall him there, yet when he stood out, in an holy obstinacy against them, cloathed with a gracious spirit of courage to suffer for Christ; *When he would not be perswaded they ceased, saying, the will of the Lord be done.* As it was the height of *Pauls* holiness that he would not be perswaded, he was obstinate for Gods cause, or for the doing of a duty; so it is the height of many mens wickednesse that they will not be perswaded, they are obstinate against God, or against the doing of their duty; Such as are infected with the lust of contending, will maintaine that opinion pertinaciously, which they cannot maintaine truely. As some strive for the love of victory, rather then of truth; so others strive because they love strife even more then victory, and had rather contend then conquer, because that puts an end to strife. In such cases they doe best who doe no more; And if *Jobs* case had been such, if he had held up the discourse, not for truth but for victory, or because he would have the last word, like a clamorous Sophister, who hath alwayes somewhat to say, though nothing to the purpose; In that case, I say, *Jobs* friends had done wisely in ceasing to answer; They indeed did well upon their owne supposition, though as to the truth of *Jobs* condition they failed greatly. *Job* was not a man of that spirit, he that persists in holding and defending truth, is not obstinate but constant.

Further, as to the ground why they ceased, according to their supposition,

Observe;

To be righteous in our owne eyes is hatefull both to God and good men.

A man is never so vile in the eyes of those who can discerne him, as when he is righteous in his owne; how righteous soever any man is, he should be little in owning it. To insist much upon our owne righteousnesse, savours rankly of a Pharisee (*Luke* 18. 9.) Christ spake a parable to this purpose (that's the title of the Parable) (*ver.* 9.) *And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.* Then

Then follows the Pharisees boast of his fasting twice in the weeke, &c. And when the text saith (*ver.* 14.) *the Publican went downe to his house justified rather then the other.* It doth not imply that the Pharisee was at all justified, but rather that being righteous in his owne eyes, he was under a sad sentence of condemnation in the eyes of God. The meaning is not that the Pharisee was somewhat justified, and the Publican more; But that the Pharisee was not justified at all. It is our duty to follow after righteousnesse, but our sin to boast of it (*Math.* 5. 3.) *Blessed are the poore in spirit. The more poore we are in spirit, the more rich we are in spiritualls.* Poverty of spirit is directly opposite to our being righteous in our owne eyes. *Christ came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.* (Math. 9. 13.) By the righteous there we are to understand those that are righteous in their owne eyes, those that have high thoughts of themselves; The sinners whom Christ calls to repentance are the poore in spirit, though indeed the righteous in their owne eyes, are the greatest sinners. As we never doe worse, or more against right, then when we doe that (as it was said of that ungovern'd age, *Judg.* 17. 6.) which is right in our own eyes, so we are never worse, then when we are righteous in our owne eyes.

From the whole matter of these words, we see, that as *Jobs* friends had been mistaken all along in that which they spake, so now in the reason of their ceasing to speake; which was a supposall that *Job* was righteous in his owne eyes.

Hence observe;

There is nothing more common then for men to mistake and misjudge one another.

Jobs friends concluded him setled in a proud conceit of his owne righteousnesse, because he constantly denyed their charge of unrighteousnesse. Some impose an opinion upon their brethren which is not theirs, and make them say that which they doe not affirme; how injurious is this! yea some mis-judge the word of God, as well as the words of men. They wrest the Scriptures, (2 *Pet.* 3. 16.) They make the Scripture speake that, which the holy Ghost never intended. It is dangerous to straine the word of a man, much more the word of God. The former proceeds from a want of charity, but the latter is a great impiety. There

could not be a more unrighteous thought conceived of *Job* in any mans heart, then that he was (as his friends thought him) righteous in his owne eyes; yet thus they thought him, nor would they thinke otherwiſe of him, let him ſay what he would to the contrary. So much of the firſt verſe which giveth us a reaſon why *Jobs* friends ſate downe and ceaſed to anſwer; His being (as they judged him) righteous in his owne eyes. In the next verſe *Elihu* gives out a ſeverer Judgement againſt him then this; To be at all righteous in our owne eyes (according to the ſence intended) argues a man to be both very blind and very proud, but for a man to be ſo righteous in his owne eyes, as that he dares juſtifie himſelfe rather then the moſt righteous God, argues not only blindneſſe and pride, but pride and blaſphemy; yet thus ſaith *Elihu* of *Job*, as it followeth.

Verſ. 2. *Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the ſon of Barachel the Buzite of the kindred of Ram: againſt Job was his wrath kindled, becauſe he juſtified himſelfe rather then God.*

Here comes in the fourth ſpeaker, as a moderator or determiner of this great diſpute; And he begins, much unlike a moderator, *in a heate.*

Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu.

Novum hic eſt diſputandi actum, nova etiam argumentandi forma, tanto ſubtilior quàto magis in ſeipſam reflexa. Nim videtur argumentari (ut logici loquuntur) quaſi ad hominem, ex ipſis Jobi verbis & dictis. Pined:

It is very common for men to grow hot in diſpute, but for a man to begin his diſpute with an heat, that's very ſtrange; many have been all in a flame upon a little diſcourſe, but to be in a flame upon the entrance of a diſcourſe, is a thing almoſt unheard of. Yet thus it was with this man;

Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu.

The Hebrew is, *his noſe or noſtrills were angry.* The Metaphor is taken from Horſes, Bears, Lyons, Bulls, or any furious creatures, who ſend forth fumes of wrath or anger at their noſtrills. The blood at the heart of an angred angry man is enflamed, and he, as it were, breaths out fire and ſmoake at his mouth and noſtrills. *Elihu* came in a flame to this buſineſſe.

How unceſſant were the oppoſitions of *Job*! no ſooner had thoſe three men ceaſed ſpeaking, but a fourth riſeth up to ſpeake. The Good

Good man found no reſt; his three friends had their Saboth, they ceaſed or reſted from the diſpute, but *Job* was at week-day labour ſtill, attending the words of this angry moderator. Mr. *Broughton* renders, *The anger of Elihu was in choler. Anger is hot, but his anger was heate*, or at leaſt his anger was heated, yea it was not only heated as at the fire, but kindled like a fire.

Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu.

Anger is a fire; and (as *Solomon* ſaith) *can a man take fire in his boſome, and not be burned?* ſo I may ſay, can a man carry anger in his boſom, and not burne himſelfe, if not others with it? And as fire is blowne up by bellowes, ſo is anger by provocation. The anger of God is expreſſed in a heat (*Deut.* 29. 24.) *What meaneth the heat of this great anger* (ver. 20.) *The anger of the Lord and his jealouſie ſhall ſmoke againſt that man.* And (*Pſal.* 2. 12.) *If his wrath be kindled but a little*, &c. The leaſt ſparklings of it are terrible. The anger of God is a moſt dreadfull fire; and the anger of man hath much dread in it. We have need to look to our paſſions. Fire is good, but it muſt be kept in its due place; fire on the hearth, fire in the chimney is good, but fire in the roof, or among the houſhold ſtuff conſumeth all. There is (as I may ſay) an hearth for anger where it will doe no hurt.

Philoſophi ira ζέσιν αἵμα-τος. facium, ſpiritus affectuum inſtrumẽta ſunt; ut res phantaſiæ imprimitur, ita ſpiritus commovetur ad habendam vel depellendam. Coc:

Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the ſon of Barachel.

There are many queſtions about this perſon among the learned; It would be too great a diverſion, and poſſibly an unprofitable one to ſtay upon them. We have him here deſcribed, Firſt, by his name. The Hebrew Etymologiſts ſay, This proper name *Elihu* ſignifieth, *He is my God*, or *my God is he.* And as he is deſcribed by his name, ſo by his nativity or parentage;

Elihu the ſon of Barachel the Buzite of the kindred of Ram.

His Fathers name *Barachel*, ſignifies in the Hebrew, *one whom God hath bleſſed*, or, *the bleſſing of God.* The ſons name was, *my God is the Lord.* And the fathers name was, *the bleſſing of God*, or, *one whom God hath bleſſed.* We may note a piece of holy devotion in the old fathers in giving ſignificant names to their children. And ſurely it may be of much uſe to give our children

good and significant names, such names as carry a remembrance of duty, or of mercy. When *Alexander the Great*, met with a common Souldier whose name was *Alexander*, He said to him, *Be sure thou doe nothing unworthy the name of Alexander.* His name had a great encouragement in it to gallantry in warre. And it is noted of *Diadumenus*, that having obtained both the Empire and the name of *Antonius*, he said, *I will labour all I can, that I may not be injurious to the name of the Anthonines.* This should be much more our care and study, where holinesse makes the name honourable; *John* signifieth the *grace of God*; And, as I remember it is the saying of one of the ancients, concerning a bad man so called, *Thy name is John, but thou art not John*; thy name signifieth *grace*, but thou art not *gracious*. *Ambrose* said to the virgin *Agnes*, or *Anne*, *There is chastity in thy name, doe not contradict thy name.* So *Jerome* writing to *Pammachius*, which name, signifieth a *fighter against all*; *Do thou* (saith he) *fight against all sin, against the Devill, the world, and thy owne corruption.* The same Author writing to *Melecius*, which signifies, *Honey sweetnesse*, *Have thou* (saith he) *the sweetnesse of honey in thy manners.* And to *Probus* he writes, *Thy name signifieth honesty, Then be thou an honest man.* The Apostle exhorts (*2 Tim. 2. 19.*) *Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity*, It is a great argument, seeing all who professe the Gospel are called Christians, from Christ, that therefore they should adorne that most worthy name by worthy walking. And let me say to all those whose names signifie any thing of God, of Grace, or goodnesse, ye have a good and gracious name, let not your actions be a reproach to God, nor a shame to the profession of his grace. A good heart will make a good use of every thing, and is provoked to have more then a name for that grace or goodnesse which is in his name, even to be really that which his name is. How should an *Elihu*, whose name signifies *He is my God*, labour after this holy assurance that *God is his?* How should a *Barachel*, whose name signifieth the *Blessing of God*, be alwayes praying and waiting for the blessing of God, or returning praise to God (both in heart and life) for all his blessings?

Ego cuncta ne desim nomini Augustorum.

Elihu the son of Barachel
The Buzite.

Here *Elihu* is described by his family, as before by his father. *The*

The Buzite, that is, coming from *Buz*. Yet there is a difference about that, some say he had that name from the place where he dwelt; we read (*Jer. 25. 23.*) of a place called *Buz*. Others say, he was called *the Buzite* from the name of his family; As he descended from *Buz* the son of *Nahor Abrahams* brother (*Gen. 22. 21.*) *Micah hath borne children unto thy brother Nahor, Huz his first born and Buz his brother.* Master *Broughton* is cleare in it, who gives this glosse upon the text; *Elihu the Buzite, of Buz Abrahams brothers son of the family of Ram, famous then for knowledge. Rebecca and Jacob seeme to have left religion in Nahors house.* Thus farre he. *Jerome* saith, *Elihu was descended from the second son of Milcah, whom the Septuagint call Bauz, from him was Balaam the sorcerer, who according to the Tradition of the Jewes was this Elihu spoken of in the book of Job, at first, an holy man and a Prophet, but afterwards an apostate.* But I leave that as a Rabbinicall Tradition.

Hieron. in tract. Hebr. in per Genesim.

We have yet a further description of *Elihu* in the Text.

Of the kindred of Ram, of the family or posterity of *Ram*.

Who this *Ram* was is much controverted by Interpreters; nor is the controversie yet ended who this *Ram* was. Some say he was that *Ram* spoken of (*Ruth 4.19.*) But it is not likely, that he was so ancient as *Job*, or if he were, he would not leave the *Israelites* (from whom *Pharez* was descended) to dwell among the *Edomites*. Others say he was that *Aram* mentioned (*Gen. 22. 21.*) But neither doth this appeare true; for then *Elihu* could not be a *Buzite*, but must draw his line from *Kemuel* the brother of *Buz*. The Chaldee Paraphrase tells us, he was *Abraham*. And to cleare this 'tis said (as our owne learned Annotators have given it) that he had a threefold gradation in his name; First, he was called only *Ram*, which signifieth *high*; Secondly, *Abram*, which signifieth *A high father*; Thirdly, *Abraham*, which signifieth *the high father of a multitude*. But, upon which to determine I conceive it impossible, nor is there any great matter in it. Only this seemes cleare, that the family of *Ram* was some great and illustrious family in those times; and we may take notice how distinct and punctuall the penman of this book was in describing the pedegree of *Elihu*. And there may be two reasons why the Spirit of God directed him to be so; First, because he was but a young

Apparet, quod sicut Eliu dicitur Buzitis quia originem traxit ex Buz; ita dicitur de Ram ratione maternæ originis. Melcha enim mater Buz fuit filia Aram unde et 70 loco Ram legunt Aram. Proindé sicut tres reges visitaverunt Job causa amicitiæ, ita Eliu causa cognationis, de qua vendicavit sibi in Job plusculum audacioris licentiæ. Ianson:

Quis iste fuerit, quærunt interpretes, Grammatici certant, & adhuc sub judice lis est. Drus.

Neutræ sententiæ accederem, sed Ram *alium quempiam fuisse putarim virum celebrem et clarum ex familia Nahor.* Merc:

young man; And therefore as *Saul* (1 *Sam.* 17. 56.) when he saw *David* a young man, he asked after his parentage; *Enquire whose Son this stripling is*; I would faine know his kindred. So the kindred of *Elihu* is thus distinctly set downe, that he who by reason of his youth was little knowne as to his person, might be the better knowne by his Ancestors, or parentage.

Secondly, His parentage is thus distinctly set downe, to assure us, that this is a true history; For some have made the whole booke of *Job* to be but a parable, asserting there was no such reall thing. But this one passage gives an undeniable proofe, that this was a reall history, and the matter really acted. This person being described by his owne name and his fathers name, and the next of his kindred.

From the consideration of the person who carried on so great a part in this businesse, *Elihu, the son of Barachel the Buzite of the kindred of Ram*, who was of a strange Country, and if allyed to *Abraham*, yet at a great distance; we may observe;

God did preserve a seed of religion, and of holy men to maintaine his truth among those who lived in darke places, and were wrapt up in many errors and superstitions.

This was also noted from the first words of this booke, *There was a man in the Land of Uz*; A man of gracious accomplishments and of a heavenly light. Here also was *Elihu* the *Buzite*, A man that had great knowledge about holy things (as we shall see afterwards) in those parts and times when and where abundance of darknesse, blindnesse and ignorance reigned.

Having thus described *Elihu*; The history proceeds.

Against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himselfe rather then God.

In the former part of the verse it is said; *Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu*; Not specifying against whom, nor the cause why; here he doubles the same words, with an addition, first, of the person with whom he was angry; *Against Job was his wrath kindled.* And as he tells us the marke or object of his wrath; so he gives, secondly, the reason of it; *Because he justified himself rather then God.* Before I come to the explication of this latter branch, take these two brief notes.

First,

First, *A godly man in maintaining a good cause, may give just reason of anothers passion or anger.*

Job was a good man, and his cause was good, yet you see a wise and a good mans wrath is kindled. *Paul* and *Barnabas* were two good men, yet a difference arose between them (*Acts* 15. 39.) *And the contention was so sharp between them that they departed asunder.*

Secondly, Considering the cause of this anger in generall, *Because he justified himselfe rather then God*; we see it was an anger for Gods cause.

Hence note;

Anger for God or in the cause of God is holy anger.

Though for the most part the flesh or our carnall corruption is the cause of anger, and it begins at selfe; yet sometimes it is stirr'd in the cause of God. It is said of *Moses*, the meekest man on earth (*Numb.* 12. 3.) that when he saw the idolatry of the people (*Exod.* 32. 19.) *His anger waxed hot*; He was so angry that he cast the Tables of the Law which God had written with his own hand, out of his hand and broke them. It is said (*Mar.* 3. 5.) *Jesus Christ looked about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardnesse of their hearts*; He also exprest a great deale of zealous anger (*Joh.* 2. 15.) *When he made a whip of small cords, and drove the buyers and sellers out of the Temple.* Some of the Hebrews tell us, that the word here used for anger, signifieth anger carried out to the destruction of sin, and that is a very gracious anger. There are two things which exceedingly declare the holinesse of a mans spirit. First, when he can patiently beare loads of evills and wrongs in his owne cause, or which have but a private respect. Secondly, When he is ready to take fire in the cause of God; many dull and sluggish soules can heare God abused, and their spirits stirre no more then a stone; *Elihu* was angry, but it was in the cause of God; or, *Because Job Justified himselfe rather then God.* When we are angry with sin, we are angry (as the Apostle adviseth us to be) and *sin not*. That's anger without sin, when we are angry with sin; and are stirred up to oppose and suppresse the pride and insolency of mans spirit or speeches against God; To be angry for our owne honour, and interest, or

אב *id genus iræ notat, quo fertur quis ad abolitionem peccati, cum quo si sit veritas justissimus effectus est.* Coc:

Hoc probes abnegationem tui & mundi, si injuriarum ferens sis, peccatum autem ferre non possis; idq; ita ut non ad vindicandum sed ad emendandum exstimulares.

Gourd,

Gourd, is an argument of undue love to felfe. When God fpared *Nineveh* the Prophet was exceeding angry (*Jon.* 4. 1.) But his was finfull anger; becauſe he was angry for his owne ſake, fearing to be called a falſe Prophet; He ſet himſelfe downe to ſee what would become of the City, that he might have a perſonall glory, and be cryed up for a Prophet indeed. And when God had ſmitten his Gourd, he was angry and angry *unto the death* (ver. 8.) and all becauſe he miſſed that which pleaſed himſelfe. Many can be angry when they themſelves are diſcredited, but when diſhonour is caſt upon God, or his intereſt ſlighted, how quiet and tame, how cold and dull are their ſpirits! The anger of this man was a noble anger, as to the occaſion and riſe of it, *Jobs* ſelfe-juſtification, or

Becauſe he juſtified himſelfe rather then God.

This is a high poynt, and may juſtly provoke our anger, *Elihu* was not angry with *Job* becauſe he juſtified himſelfe againſt his friends, but becauſe he juſtified himſelfe rather then God.

Here a queſtion will ariſe, and it will ask ſome paines to determine it; Was this true? did *Job* juſtifie himſelfe rather then God? Was it poſſible *Job* ſhould do ſo? I ſhall give only a generall anſwer to this queſtion; *Job* did not juſtifie himſelf rather then God, either explicitely, or intentionally, but by conſequents he did. And though it be granted that *Job* gave juſt occaſion of this ſharp reproofe by his raſh and paſſionate ſpeeches, uttered in the heate of diſpute, and in the grief of his heart, yet it cannot be denied that *Elihu* did ſomewhat ſtrain *Jobs* words, though not beyond their ſence, yet beyond his ſence, and gave them the hardeſt interpretation (ſomewhat beſide the rule of charity) which they could beare, nor did he obſerve that meekneſſe and moderation which might well have become him, to a man in that caſe. *O how hard is it not to offend or doe ill, while we are doing well!*

To cleare this a little further conſider, There is a twofold ſtraining of words; Firſt, beyond the ſence of the words ſpoken; Secondly, beyond the ſence of the ſpeaker. I doe not ſay *Elihu* in affirming this of *Job*, ſtrained his words beyond their ſence, but he ſtrained them beyond *Jobs* ſence. *Job* ſpake words which might lay him under this cenſure, that he juſtified himſelfe rather then God; But this was far from his intention; For doubtleſſe he had

had rather a thouſand times his tongue ſhould have been cut out of his mouth, then to juſtifie himſelfe with it rather then God, or to ſpeak a word to the diſparagement of Gods Juſtice. So then it was hard for *Elihu* to charge *Job* thus, though *Job* had let fall ſome inconſiderate ſpeeches, which adminiſtred occaſion for ſuch a charge. And as one of the Ancients ſpeakes of difficulties and ſeeming contradictions in Scripture; *Diſtinguiſh the times, and the Scriptures will accord*; So diſtinguiſh the time of this diſpute, take *Job* at the beginning of it, before he was teazed and heated by his friends, and then he ſpake at a very low rate of himſelfe; *If I were righteous I would not know my owne ſoule.* But in the heat and towards the later end of this long diſpute, *Job* gave too much advantage for ſuch a conſtruction to be put upon his words, that *he juſtified himſelfe rather then God*; then which nothing can be ſaid more unjuſtifiable, nor more reproveable.

Hence obſerve;

To juſtifie our ſelves doth uſually and juſtly lay us open to the reproofe of others; or, *To juſtifie our ſelves, draweth blame upon our ſelves.*

To juſtifie, is foure wayes uſed in Scripture.

Firſt, (which is the moſt remarkable and excellent act of it) God juſtifieth man (*Rom.* 8. 33.) *It is God that juſtifieth.* This act of divine Grace conſiſts in two things; Firſt, in the imputation of Chriſts righteouſneſſe to us; Secondly, in the free remiſſion of our ſins.

Secondly, Man juſtifieth God (*Luk.* 7. 29, 30.) *And all the people that heard him, and the Publicans juſtified God, being baptized with the Baptiſme of John.* Where to juſtifie imports as much as to Glorifie doth, (*Acts* 13. 48.) *And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord*; That is, they readily approved and received the word of the Lord; when we approve the Doctrine, and doings of God, his word and works, then we juſtifie him. And how ready ſhould we be on all occaſions to juſtifie God, who only is and is altogether good, when he is ſo graciouſly ready to juſtifie us who are evill, altogether evill and ungodly.

Thirdly, We read in Scripture of man juſtifying man, which is done any of theſe three wayes.

First, He that consents to what another hath done (though the deed be evill) justifieth him in doing it. A secret liking of any mans action is (as much as that amounts to) the justification of his person.

Secondly, He that openly approveth or applaudeth what another hath done, justifieth him much more. To consent with sinners is sinfull, to flatter them in their sin is abominable.

Thirdly, He that stands up to maintaine and defend what another hath done, justifies him most of all. All these acts of justification *Job* denied his friends, while he said (*Chap.* 27. 5.) *God forbid I should justifie you*; That is, that I should secretly content to or openly approve and maintaine what you have said concerning me, or you in saying it.

Fourthly, The same man is said to justifie himselfe; this selfe-justification is that which kindled the wrath of *Elihu* against *Job*; The text is expresse; *Because he justified himselfe*, &c. This justification of our selves is of two sorts.

First, Internall and mentall; when in our hearts we give sentence for, or approve of our selves; when we inwardly boast and glory of our selves, whether in what we are, or in what we doe and affirme. The Pharisee (*Luk.* 18. 11.) *stood and prayed thus with himselfe* (or to himselfe, that is, silently) *God I thanke thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publicane*; *I fast twice in the weeke*, &c. Thus he justified himselfe.

Secondly, There is an externall and vocall selfe-justification, when we openly commend, and cry up our selves; Thus *Jehu* justified himselfe (2 *Kings* 10. 16.) *Come see my zeale for the Lord*; He would needs blow a trumpet, and proclaime before all men how good a man he was, and what good he had done.

Yet further, the justification of our selves is two-fold.

First, Lawfull, yea and commendable; Take that in two particulars.

First, That man who is really and indeed in a justified state, through the free grace of God in Christ, he, when a just occasion is offered, may justifie himselfe declaratively before men; For as we ought alwayes to justifie our selves declaratively by our works, that is, give evidence by our workes that we are justified by faith; so we may justifie our selves by our words, to magnifie the rich grace of God in justifying us freely through Christ. *David* called others to take notice of what God had done for his soule, (*Psal.* 66. 16.) Thus a beleever may lawfully at any time, and at all times, it is his duty to justifie himselfe before men, by giving as the Apostle directs (1 *Pet.* 3. 15.) *an answer to every one that asketh a reason of the hope that is in him*, (that is, of his justified state) *with meekness and feare*.

Secondly, A man that is sound at heart, honest and upright with God, may lawfully justifie himselfe, as to the integrity of his intentions, purposes, and designes, when he falls under other mens jealousies and suspicions. *David* being often unjustly condemned by *Saul*, was as often in this worke of justifying himselfe against him, (*Psal.* 7. 8.) *Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousnesse, and according to mine integrity that is in me*; As if he had said, I am judged unrighteously, but I appeale to thy righteous judgement, who fully knowest (which I also know, my conscience bearing witnes) mine integrity. I appeale to thy mercy for the many sins which I have committed against thy selfe, but I appeale to thy Justice whether (as I am accused) I have at all sinned against *Saul*. We may reade *Paul* doing the same at large while he professed (1 *Thes.* 2. 3, 4.) that he did not act upon covetous designes for himselfe, nor was a flatterer of others, but as *he was allowed of God to be put in trust with the Gospel, even so he spake, not as pleasing men but God, which tryeth the heart*. As it was the continuall practise of false Apostles and others to discredit *Pauls* Ministery, by bringing his person out of credit, so it was his continuall care to counter-worke them, by a professed vindication of himselfe. We may lawfully justifie our selves and our actings, when we are not only suspected, but falsly accused, and wrongfully charged about them, and that either of these two waves.

First, When we are charged to have done that evill, which we never did, then we may justifie our selves by a flat deniall; *David* did so in that case (*Psal.* 7. 3, 4.) *O Lord my God, if I have done this, if there be iniquity in my hand*, &c. As if he had said, O God, thou knowest I have not done this which many burden me with. Againe (*Psal.* 35. 11.) *False witnesse did rise up, they laid to my charge things that I knew not*; I have not had so much as a thought to do that which they say I have actually done.

Thus he diſcharged himſelfe of thoſe crimes, which indeed he never committed nor was guilty of.

Secondly, We may juſtifie our ſelves lawfully, when the good we have done is charged upon us as an evill deed, or we looked upon as evill doers, when we have done, nothing for the matter, but our duty, and that in the manner according to rule. Thus when *Paul* had juſtified himſelfe, by denying the evill which *Tertullus* accuſed him of, (*Acts* 24. 12, 13.) he preſently juſtified himſelfe alſo in what he had done well, though his enemies judged it evill (*ver:* 14.) *But this I confeſſe, that after the way which they call hereſie, ſo worſhip I the God of my fathers, beleeving all things which are written in the Law and the Prophets.* This ſelfe-juſtification is often very needfull; For as there are ſome who call evill good, ſo there are others, who call good evill, and make that a mans fault which is his commendation. It was accounted a crime by ſome of old to be leſſe vitious then others, and it is accounted a crime by ſome at this day to be more vertuous then others; to be more holy, more exact, more wiſely preciſe and circumſpect in our wayes then others, many interpret folly, and ſtamp with madneſſe. (2 *Corinth.* 5. 13.) *Paul* was thought *beſide himſelfe*, a meere Fanatick in his high actings for Jeſus Chriſt; when our actions are thus miſ-repreſented, and put under ſuch diſguiſes, every good man is obliged to doe himſelfe right. For as we may honeſtly accuſe others, and declare the evill that we know they have done, when called to it; ſo we may ſpeak out and declare the good we have done, & maintaine that to be good (if it be good) which we have done, (though many call it evill) when called to it. Thus a man may ſtand upon his termes with all men, and yet be humble, and deeply ſenſible of his owne ſinfullneſſe and vileneſſe before God. *Paul* ſaw nothing, upon the matter, but ſin in himſelfe (*Rom.* 7. 14, 24.) *When I would doe good, evill is preſent with me; O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death;* That is, of ſin; as 'tis called (*Rom.* 6. 6.) Thus he ſpake when he had to doe with God; But when he had to doe with men, when he ſaw himſelfe called to anſwer the accuſations, and wipe off the aſperſions which the enemies of the Goſpel caſt upon him. (1 *Corinth.* 4. 4.) then he ſaith, *I know nothing* (that is, no evill) *by my ſelfe. Paul* was very conſcious of his naturall infirmity, yet very confident of his ſpiri-

ſpirituall integrity. And therefore when he ſaw the Glory of God was like to be obſcured through his abaſement, and to be eclipſed by the ſhadowes and darkneſſe which men caſt upon his Miniſtery, then he tooke due honour to himſelfe, and made the moſt of himſelfe, according to truth, in the eyes of all the world. Thus I have ſhewed what juſtifying of our ſelves is lawfull, and I have done it that we may more clearely diſcerne, what I am to ſhew next, or

Secondly, Namely, what that juſtifying of our ſelves is, which indeed is unlawfull, reprovable and blame-worthy; I ſhall inſtance it in a few particulars.

Firſt, They juſtifie themſelves ſinfully, who doe good with a deſire to be ſeene and applauded of men for it; thus Chriſt charged the Phariſees (*Math:* 6. 5.) *They pray ſtanding in the Synagogues, and in the corners of the ſtreets, that they may be ſeene of men:* and (*ver:* 16.) *They diſfigure their faces, that they may appeare unto men to faſt.* It is not a ſin to be ſeene of men in doing good, but to doe good to be ſeene of men is ſinfull, and the patching up of a ſelfe-juſtification.

Secondly, They juſtifie themſelves ſinfully, who would pretend, or ſeeme to have done that good, which indeed they have not. There is as much of this hypocriſie lodging and working now in the hearts of the children of men, as was of old in the heart of *Saul* (1 *Sam:* 15. 13, 14, to the 22d verſe) who profeſſed highly to have fulfilled the will of God to a haires breadth; *Bleſſed be thou of the Lord* (ſaid he to *Samuel*) *I have performed the commandment of the Lord;* Thus he inſiſted upon his integrity, and juſtified himſelfe to the face of *Samuel*, who quickly convinced him that he had done the Lords worke to halves.

Thirdly, They juſtifie themſelves ſinfully, who either totally deny, or extenuate and leſſen the evill that they have done; this kinde of ſinfull ſelfe-juſtification was opened largely at the 33d verſe of the former Chapter, upon that imprecation made by *Job*, *If I covered my tranſgreſſion as Adam, by hiding mine iniquity in my boſome.* I referre the Reader thither for a fuller diſcovery of it.

Fourthly, They juſtifie themſelves ſinfully, who mingle their owne workes with the workes or righteouſneſſe of Jeſus Chriſt for juſtification; for though ſuch pretend to Chriſt, and ſay they take

take up Christ and his righteousnesse for justification, yet it will be found a selfe-justification only; seeing unlesse Christ justifie us wholly, he justifieth us not at all; As the Apostle concludes (*Gal.* 5. 4.) *Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the Law; ye are fallen from grace*; That is, yee who mingle your workes with Grace, are not justified by Grace, but (which will be (unlesse repented of) your condemnation) by your workes.

Lastly, They justifie themselves sinfully, who say they are justified by Christ from their sins, while they continue in their sins, and hold fast their iniquities; For as they that mingle their owne good workes with the righteousnesse of Christ, are selfe-justifiers, so also are they that take hold of the righteousnesse of Christ, while they will not let goe, nor part with their evill workes. To looke for justification while we continue in the love and practise of any knowne sin and unrighteousnesse, is as sinfull as to expect justification by our owne righteousnesse.

Objett. But doth not the Scripture say, that *God justifieth the ungodly* (*Rom.* 4. 5.)

I answer, Though God justifieth the ungodly, yet the justified are not ungodly; God justifieth the ungodly and makes them holy by the grace of sanctification, as well as righteous by the grace of justification: righteousnesse of life is alwayes the fruit of righteousnesse by faith. Therefore if any man continuing in any knowne sin, faith he is justified, he hath justified himselfe, for none doe so who are justified of God. O how deeply are they condemned by God who thus justifie themselves! Nothing is more desirable then to be justified by God, and nothing is more dangerous then to justifie our selves, either by our owne righteousnesse, or in our unrighteousnesse. Now as to justifie our selves any of these wayes, is exceeding sinfull before God, so to justifie our selves any way, layeth us open or obnoxious to the censures of men. And that's the reason why this holy man *Job* was so deeply censured; For though he justified not himselfe in any of those fences which are are sinfull, yet he did some way justifie himselfe, and while he justified himselfe only as he might, he was condemned as having justified himselfe in a way which he might not. We had need be very cautious, how we any way or in any kinde justifie our selves, few having done it without incurring censure, if not condemnation from others. But

But what was *Jobs* selfe-justification, or of what kinde, that it raised such a dust, yea kindled such a flame of Anger in the breast of *Elihu*? I answer;

Job did not justifie himselfe by lyes or falsehoods; that was not the matter for which *Elihu* was angry with *Job*, but because he supposed he was more tender of his owne name then of Gods. Thus the Text speakes expressely; *Against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himselfe rather then God.*

Hence note;

To justifie our selves rather then God, is not only sinfull but flagitious, not only sinfull but blasphemous.

Let God be true and every man a lyar (Rom. 3. 4.) woe to those who goe about to save their owne honour, by speaking that which reflects dishonour upon God, or who keepe their owne credit untoucht, by exposing his to any hazzard; let God be just and every man unrighteous. As whosoever exalts himselfe, humbles God (when we exalt our selves vainely, we humble God as much as we can, and so it will be interpreted) so he that justifies himselfe in any degree unduely accuseth God, how much more he that justifieth himselfe rather then God. To commend or praise our selves, in the hearing of men, is unsavory, to commend or praise our selves rather then men (who are our fellowes, yea though our inferiors) is odious, how much more to justifie our selves rather then God, who is infinitely above us. It becomes the best of men, to accuse, judge and condemne themselves, to draw up their owne enditement, and say, we have deserved worse then we suffer from the hand of God; and have done lesse then duty requires at our hand.

But, because to justifie our selves rather then God, is a thing so horrid, few will be brought under this conviction, that they are guilty of it, or chargeable with it. And therefore I shall endeavour to make it appeare, that there are many who though they doe not justifie themselves rather then God directly and barefaced, yet they doe it secretly or constructively. I shall make out this in generall as it may concern any man, while I more distinctly shew, how *Job* incurred this suspition, and gave *Elihu* more then a probable ground to say, that he justified himselfe rather then God. *Job* never said, he was more just then God, but he said

ſaid many things which gave *Elihu* occaſion to ſay, That ſurely he *juſtified himſelfe rather then God.*

Firſt, When he ſpake ſo largely of his own innocency, ſpending five whole Chapters in the vindication of it, and ſpake ſo little, comparatively, of the righteouſneſſe and juſtice of God, this might bring him under a ſuſpition of juſtifying himſelfe rather then God. For what could this intimate to his hearers, but that he had better performed the part of a gracious and righteous man, then God had of a gracious Father or righteous Judge. Though all that be true (how much ſoever it is) which we ſpeak of our ſelves, yet it is not good to ſpeak much, much leſſe all of our ſelves; eſpecially when upon that account, we may ſeeme to diſpute either the juſtice or goodneſſe of God in dealing out the troubles and afflictions, under which we ſuffer.

Secondly, While *Job* did ſo often and ſo boldly offer to plead his cauſe before Gods tribunall, and was ſo importunate for a Hearing, this carried a ſecret implication, that God had not dealt well with him, or at leaſt had not conſidered his cauſe throughly, for if he had, ſurely he ſhould have found more favorable dealing from God then he dayly experienced.

Thirdly, While *Job* complained ſo often and greatly of the greatneſſe of his afflictions, of the weight and heavineſſe of the hand of God upon him, and, that he being but a poore worme, the great and mighty God ſhould ſtretch out his ſtrong hand againſt him; This alſo might be conſtrued, as if he thought God did not take a due meaſure of his infirmities, but let temptations take hold of him which were not common to man, and burdened him beyond what he was able to beare. Now, what was this, but to juſtifie himſelfe rather then God?

Fourthly, While he complained that the hand of God had not only touched him, but even abode and dwelt upon him, that he was conſumed from morning to morning, that he had not only wearieſome nights, but moneths of vanity appointed to him, that his afflictions were not only exceeding ſharpe, but exceeding long, yea that though they were extreamly violent, yet perpetuall, this bare hard upon the goodneſs and wiſdome of God. For, to ſay that God over-acts in the meaſure, and exceeds in the continuance of our afflictions, reflect alike upon the honour of God, and are rather a juſtification of our ſelves in bearing the croſſe, then of God in laying it onn.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, *Job* in ſeverall paſſages of this booke deſired God to make an end of him, and take him out of this world; he was troubled that God did not kill him out of hand, or out-right; this was a juſtification of himſelfe rather then God, as if he knew better, whether it were more fit for him to live in a ſickly, weakly, painfull condition, or to be delivered out of it by death. As we ſhould be willing to die, when God calls, ſo to live till God calls, and not to haſten death; He that beleeves (as he ought) will not make haſt out of the troubles of this world, much leſſe out of the world, becauſe he finds it troubleſome.

Sixthly, He ſeemed to juſtifie himſelfe rather then God, while he was ſo much troubled, becauſe God did not preſently reveale to him the reaſon of his troubles; *Why is light given to a man whoſe way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?* was his complaint (*Chap.* 3. 23.) that is, wherefore is the light of this naturall life given to me, whoſe way is in the darke, and who know not the reaſon why I am thus afflicted? We ought to ſit downe in this aſſurance, be our condition never ſo reſtleſſe, that the moſt wiſe God hath a reaſon for every ſtroake of trouble he layeth upon our loynes, though we ſee it not. They who cannot fully reſigne themſelves and their wayes to God, yea reſolve their wills into the will of God, are much diſquieted and reſtleſſe in their minds, when they ſee not the reaſon of Gods dealing with them, or why it is ſo with them? Let all ſuch know, this alſo is to make our ſelves wiſer then God, and to juſtifie our ſelves rather then him. And therefore from all theſe conſiderations take theſe two Inferences, which may keepe us ever at a diſtance from this high preſumption, yea (which we ſhould carefully avoyd) from the ſhaddow and appearance of it; The juſtifying of our ſelves rather then God.

Firſt, It is enough to condemne us under the guilt of this ſin, if we allow not all that God doth to be good, yea and beſt for us, how much or how long, or in what kinde ſoever he is pleaſed to afflict us with evill. It is our duty *to accept*, that is, to take well at Gods hand, *the puniſhment of our iniquity* (Lev: 26. 41.) how much more to welcome the ſoreſt and heavieſt croſſe which he is pleaſed to lay upon us, either for the chaſtiſement of our faylings and falls, or for the tryall and exerciſe of our graces. It is ſaid (*2 Sam:* 3. 36.) *Whatſoever the king* (meaning *David*)

vid) did, pleaſed all the people; There was a wonderfull conſent and harmony between the peoples ſpirit and *Davids* actions; Surely whatſoever God doth, ſhould pleaſe all his people, whatever he diſpenſeth, be it ſweet or ſowre, hard or ſoft, light or darkneſſe, it ſhould pleaſe all his people, and pleaſe them highly; and ſo farre as we come ſhort of this frame of heart, ſo farre doe we juſtifie our ſelves rather then God.

Secondly, *It is a fault not only if we are not ſatisfied and pleaſed with what God doth, but if we doe not praiſe and glorifie God in and for what he doth; and that not only in his juſtice that he hath done us no wrong, but in his goodneſſe, that he hath done all for our profit.* That which turnes to mans profit, ſhould alſo turne to the praiſe of God; But (as the holy Apoſtle aſſureth us, *Heb:* 12. 10.) God chaſtneth his children *for their profit* (and that the beſt and nobleſt profit) *that they might be partakers of his holineſs*; therefore we ought to praiſe and glorifie him, or to glorifie him with our praiſes while he is chaſtning us. *Truly God is good to Iſrael* (Pſal. 73. 1.) He is ſo, not only when he gives *Iſrael* outward good things, or things good to ſenſe, but when he afflicts, when he writes bitter things againſt his *Iſrael*, and ſhewes them only viſions of ſorrow and matter of amazement. Till our ſoules are wrought up to this Juſtification of God in his goodneſſe, when things are worſt with us, we in ſome degree juſtifie our ſelves rather then God.

Againe, for as much as *Job*, who cannot in all things be acquitted from this charge of juſtifying himſelfe rather then God, was yet of another ſpirit and principle, then indeed or profeſſedly to juſtifie himſelfe rather then God.

Obſerve;

We may ſpeake amiſſe and wrong God when we doe not intend it, nor have the leaſt thought to doe ſo.

David prayeth for the pardon of unknowne ſins (*Pſal.* 19. 12, 13.) *Cleanſe thou me from ſecret faults, keepe backe thy ſervant alſo from preſumptuous ſins, let them not have dominion over me.* To juſtifie our ſelves rather then God knowingly, is a preſumptuous ſin, to lay any blame upon God directly is blaſphemy; *David* prayed not only to be kept from ſuch groſſe ſins, but to be cleanſed from ſecret ſins, that is, from thoſe ſins which he did not know

know that he had committed them, and which he never had any intent to commit. We may ſo miſ-place words and miſ-guide actions, when we thinke not of it, that we may quickly ſin againſt God, yea and juſtifie our ſelves rather then God; That which we doe or ſpeake is to be judged by a rule, whether it be good or evill, not meerely by our intentions though good, nor by our not intending of evill. We may be judged to have done or ſaid *evill, though we meant no evill in doing or in ſaying ſo.* Words and actions well meant may ſometimes juſtly undergoe an ill conſtruction. They that heare ſhould interpret every word in the moſt favorable ſence; but if we ſpeake unwarily and unſafely, or (as *Moſes* once) *unadviſedly with our lips*, we may thanke our ſelves if we fall under reproofe for what we have ſpoken. Therefore begge of God to ſet a watch over your mouth, and to keepe the doore of your lips, let nothing paſſe unexamined. 'Tis our wiſdome to read every word over and over before we ſpeake it; Many heare ill, who have ſpoken well, how much more may they who ſpeake doubtfully or dangerouſly. We have ſeene the cauſe why *Elihu* was ſo angry with *Job*, the next verſe will tell us why he was ſo angry with *Jobs* three friends.

Verſ. 3. *Alſo againſt his three friends was his wrath kindled, becauſe they had found no anſwer, and yet had condemned Job.*

We find *Elihu* angry on all hands, angry with *Job*, and angry with his three friends; ſome querie upon this renewing of his anger (as God did *Jonah*) whether he did well to be thus angry or thus to appeare in paſſion, and breake out afreſh in wrath? and whether the reaſons of his anger will beare him out to have been angry with Reaſon; anger prevailes moſt in thoſe in whom reaſon prevailes leaſt, and they have uſually the ſtrongeſt paſſions, who have the weakeſt judgements; children and aged perſons, the ſicke and pained are apt to be angry with others, and hard to be pleaſed themſelves. And 'tis a generall *axiom*; *The weake and impotent are naturally angry and paſſionate.* Therefore we had need looke to our paſſions, that they grow not ſtrong, for they will ſoone proclaime us weake: he is a wiſe man indeed, that can be at once wiſe and angry. (*Proverbs* 19. 11.) *The diſcretion of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to paſſe over a tranſgreſſion*; Invalidũ omne natura querulum eſt.

greſſion; And as there *Solomon* teacheth us, that diſcretion maſtereth anger, ſo he aſſureth us, that angry perſons are more then indiſcreete, fooliſh. (*Eccleſ.* 7. 9.) *Anger reſteth in the boſome of fooles.* Anger often aſſaults the prudent, but if it abides and takes up its lodging in any boſome, 'tis in the boſome of a foole, at leaſt, in that poynt, he doth fooliſhly who lendeth his boſome (though but one night) for anger to lodge in. And as at all times, ſo then eſpecially we ſhould narrowly watch and ſeverely bridle our paſſions, when (as *Elihu* here did) we undertake to adviſe thoſe who are miſtaken, or to reduce thoſe that are out of the way; when we give counſel to others, we ſhould be ſedate and quiet our ſelves. A Phyſician muſt not be angry with his patient, nor is it proper to apply medicinall healing counſel to the mind of another with an exulcerated minde. Much might be ſaid concerning this anger of *Elihu*, but I have ſpoken to that before in opening the former verſe, therefore I ſhall not ſtay here upon it; but proceed to conſider the reaſon why he was ſo.

Becauſe they had found no anſwer, and yet had condemned Job.

Not to find an anſwer may proceed;

Firſt, From a defect of paines and induſtry in ſeeking it; An anſwer muſt be ſought and digg'd for, it muſt be ſtudied and prayed for, elſe it will not be found.

Secondly, The not finding of an anſwer, may ariſe from the defect of ability, not of induſtry; many labour hard, but can make nothing of it; 'Tis probable *Jobs* three friends laboured much, yet found no anſwer; And then it was no defect of induſtry but of ability, they found no anſwer, becauſe they could not. They (as we commonly ſpeake) did even beate their braines, and bite their nayles for an anſwer, but could not attaine it, they pumpt hard, but the water would not come, God hid the thing from their eyes; ſo then, they had not found any anſwer, becauſe after all their ſearch they could not; nor ſhould it ſeeme ſtrange to us that they could not. At beſt we know but in part here, and till God by his Spirit teach us, we know nothing at all; So that I ſay, it ſhould not ſeeme ſtrange to us, that theſe wiſe and good men could find no anſwer for *Job*, but that which follows ſeemes ſtrange, even to amazement, that though they could not, *yet* (which,

(which, how alſo could they anſwer to their owne conſciences!)

had condemned Job.

What, condemne a man, and not anſwer him? 'tis worſe then to condemne a man, and not heare him. Poſſibly he that is condemned unheard, may yet deſerve a condemnation; But if we condemne a man unanſwered, he certainly, as to us, is condemned undeſervedly. And therefore this courſe of proceeding (if any) is liable not only to ſuſpition whether it be right, but to condemnation as utterly unrighteous. Though it may be a good mans caſe not to find an anſwer, yet ſurely a good man will not condemne when he cannot anſwer.

But it may be demanded; Did *Jobs* friends indeed find no anſwer before they condemned him? we have heard of their anſwers all along. No ſooner had *Job* ended his former ſpeeches, but they preſently anſwered (*Chap.* 4. 1.) *Then Eliphaz the Temanite anſwered and ſaid* (Chap. 8. 1.) *Then anſwered Bildad the Shuhite and ſaid* (Chap. 11. 1.) *Then anſwered Zophar the Naamathite and ſaid*; yea they all three anſwered *Job* a ſecond time, and two of them a Third, how then could *Elihu* juſtly ſay, *they found no anſwer, and yet had condemned Job?*

For anſwer to this objection; I ſay, They anſwered *Job*, but they did not anſwer ſufficiently. The vulgar latine tranſlation puts this gloſſe (which is more then the rules of tranſlation allow) into the text, rendring the originall thus; *Becauſe they had found no rationall anſwer, and yet had condemned Job.* They did not find out nor hit upon the right anſwer. Improper and inſufficient anſwers, how many ſoever of them we heape up againſt any mans argument, are no anſwers, they are not worthy to be called anſwers. That only is an anſwer which carrieth a conviction in it, which reacheth the ſtate and ſtrength of the queſtion, or removeth the objection. In this ſence *Jobs* three friends *had found no anſwer, and yet had condemned Job.*

Ed quòd non invenijſent reſponſionem rationalem. Vulg:

The Hebrew *is they made him wicked*, or condemned him as a wicked man. So the Septuagint, *they had no anſwer for him, and yet concluded him wicked*; we ſay, *they had condemned Job*; and the reaſon of it is, becauſe to condemne a man is to leave him under a ſuppoſal of wickedneſſe, and to ſtigmatize or brand him for a wicked man. All the wicked ſhall at laſt be condemned, and

וי רשיו עין

Καὶ ἐθεντο αὐτὸν ἀσεβῆ.

Sept: *& poſuerunt eum eſſe impium.*

none

none ought to be condemned, nor are any condemned juſtly now but the wicked; *He that juſtifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the juſt, even they both are an abomination to the Lord,* (*Pro.* 17. 15.) There is a very elegant tranſpoſition of the words in the Hebrew; we may render the text thus; *He that juſtifieth the wicked, and wickedeth the juſt*, &c. The law of *Moſes* gave an expreſſe rule againſt this perverſion of Judgement, in termes quite croſſe to thoſe in *Solomon* (Deut: 25. 1.) *If there be any controverſie between men, and they come unto Judgement, that the Judges may Judge them, then they ſhall juſtifie the righteous, and condemne the wicked.* Which you may render thus; *They ſhall juſtifie the juſt, and wickediſe the wicked*, that is, they ſhall declare the juſt man juſt, and the wicked man to be wicked. That man either really is, or is accounted wicked, who is caſt in his cauſe and condemned. That was a dreadfull ſentence (the Scripture (*Acts* 1. 20.) ſhewes it fulfilled upon the traytor *Judas*) *when he is judged, let him be condemned* (Pſal. 109. 7.) we put in the margen, *let him goe out guilty or wicked.* In this ſence *Jobs* three friends when they condemned him, caſt him as a wicked man, though they had nothing to anſwer the plea which he made for his owne integrity. We muſt not conceive any ſuch wickedneſſe in them, that they were reſolved to condemne him right or wrong, yet they held their concluſion againſt the light and reaſon of all his premiſes, and though they could prove no ill againſt him, yet vehemently ſuſpecting him, they concluded he was an ill man, and ſo condemned him.

Damnavunt pro impio, etſi nulla in eum crimina probare poſſent quibus ille ſuam vitam contaminaſſem.

Merc: Hence note firſt.

Some will proceed to condemne both perſons and opinions, though they can give no reaſonable account why they condemne either.

We read (*Iſa.* 56. 10.) *of dumbe doggs, that cannot barke*, that is, who know not what to ſpeake or ſay to purpoſe. There are many who (in this ſence) cannot barke, yet they will bite; and when they have no anſwer, they will condemne; and uſually dumbe doggs that cannot barke have the ſharpeſt teeth, and are beſt at biting, or they are better at condemning then at anſwering. As ſome finde an anſwer where there is none; that is, when ſuch reaſons are layd before them as are unanſwerable, yet they will not give over anſwering, but ſtill ſeek a knott in a ruſh, and draw

draw the law of contention as well without end as without cauſe; ſo others cannot find an anſwer where it is; yet when they cannot anſwer, they can cenſure and condemne him for wicked or perverſe, whom they cannot prove ſo. 'Tis much eaſier to ſay a man is faulty, then to find his fault; yet they who have a mind to find faults, are ſeldome to ſeeke for ſomewhat or other which they call ſo.

Note ſecondly.

To condemne opinions or perſons when we cannot anſwer them, is a practiſe juſtly condemnable.

'Tis unjuſt (as was intimated before) to condemne a man before he is heard. For though poſſibly a man unheard may have juſtice when he is condemned, yet all agree 'tis injuſtice to condemne him when he is not heard; Now if it be injuſtice to condemne a wicked man before he is heard, how unjuſt is it to condemne a man in whom we can find no wickedneſſe after we have heard him.

Thirdly, From the manner of the phraſe here uſed, Note.

To condemne a man is to render him wicked.

Condemnation (as was ſhewed) is due only to the wicked, and if an innocent be condemned, he is reputed wicked, and receives puniſhment as guilty. As that ſentence of condemnation which proceeds out of the mouth of God againſt impenitent ſinners and evill doers, bindes the guilt of their evill deeds upon them, and delivers them up to puniſhment; ſo he that condemnes his brother, faſtneth guilt upon him, and ſpeakes him deſerving puniſhment; for as where guilt is, puniſhment followeth, ſo a fault is conceived to goe before. There are theſe three things in ſin, the fault, the guilt, and the blot, or pollution of it; he that faſtneth guilt by condemnation, faſtneth the fault and blot much more; how ſad is it then to be deſervedly under condemnation? And how great is the priviledge of beleevers, to whom (though in themſelves they deſerve it) *there is no condemnation!* (Rom. 8. 1.) They who in this life are paſt condemnation, are alſo paſſed from death to life. Many are condemned who are good in the ſight of God; but all condemnation makes a man evill, yea wicked

ed in the sight of the world. And because every sentence of condemnation renders a man wicked in the eyes of worldly men, therefore righteous Magistrates will not condemne hastily; They will not judge (as Christ did not, *Isa.* 11. 3.) *after the sight of their eyes, nor reprove after the hearing of their eares*; To judge *by the sight of the eye*, is to Judge according to the first appearance of things, before inquisition hath been made, and to reprove by *the hearing of the eare*, is to reprove according to the first report which is made, without examination. We must not judge thus, because we must judge in righteousnesse, which cannot be, if we judge thus. How deliberate, how tender should we be in condemning any man, seeing condemnation doth not only impose a punishment upon, but suppose a crime, a wickednesse, a fault in him. It is grievous enough to beare punishment, but to beare the burden of a crime or fault, is in reality much more grievous.

But seeing *Elihu* declares his anger against *Jobs* three friends, because they condemned *Job*, and had found no answer. Some will say, did not *Elihu* condemne *Job* so too? No, he condemned him indeed, but he first found an answer. Againe, *Elihu* condemned *Job*, but not as his friends condemned him, his friends condemned him as to his state, judging him unsound at heart; But *Elihu* condemned him only as to this or that particular act or speech; He condemned him, First, because he spake so largely in the justification of himselfe (*Chap:* 33.8,9,10,11.) *Surely thou hast spoken in my hearing, and I have heard the voice of thy words, saying, I am clean without transgression; I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.* (And Chap. 34. 5, 6.) *For Job hath said, I am righteous, and God hath taken away my judgement; should I lye against my right, my wound is incurable without transgression.* Secondly, he condemned him for complying with the wicked, not that he thought *Job* acted like them, but because being a godly man, he in his sufferings spake sometimes and behaved himselfe like them (*Chap.* 34. 8.) *Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.* Further, he charged him with stubbornesse against God (*Chap.* 34. 37.) *For he addeth rebellion unto his sin*; and (which sounds strangely) with an easinesse towards evill men (*Chap:* 36. 17.) *Thou hast fulfilled the judgement of the wicked, judgement and justice take hold on thee.*

Thus

Thus *Elihu* condemned *Job* many wayes, but he condemned him not, without finding an answer.

Yea, I may say, *Elihu* is he, who in this great controversie and difficulty, hath found an answer, and yet hath not condemned *Job*, that is, he hath not condemned him as his three friends had condemned him: He condemned not *Job* as one perverse and crooked in his wayes, he condemned him not as one that feared not God and eschewed not evill, He condemned him not as an hypocrite, rotten at heart and unsound in his estate; Thus *Elihu* found an answer for *Job*, but condemned him not, no not while his wrath was kindled against him, because he justified himselfe rather then God.

And the processe of this booke will shew, that though *Elihu* (in the sence spoken of) condemned not *Job*, yet he found an unanswerable answer, such an answer, as to which *Job* neither could nor would make any reply; and that is the speciall businesse we have to looke at in prosecuting his discourse, even to finde out the answer which he found; for that will be as the key of the worke, to open the whole matter to us, and to shew us wherein *Job* had either fayled or exceeded, either in bearing the crosses layd upon him by God, or in managing this controversie with his friends.

JOB. Chap. 32. Vers. 4, 5, 6, 7.

Now Elihu had waited till Job had spoken: because they were elder then he.

When Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, then his wrath was kindled.

And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said, I am young, and ye are very old, wherefore I was afraid, and durst not shew you mine opinion.

I said Dayes should speak, and multitude of yeares should teach wisdome.

THis context assignes the reason, First, why *Elihu* forbare so long to speake, namely, because he was young, that reason you have in the 4th verse, as also in the 6th and 7th. Secondly, why he began at last to speake, namely, because his elders, those grave ancient men would or could speake no more. This he layes downe in the 5th verse, *When Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, then* &c.

Vers. 4. *Now Elihu had waited till Job had spoken.*

The Hebrew is, *He expected Job in words*; *Job* was long in words, or he spake long in many words; and all that while *Elihu* waited, he kept silent; but when *Job* had spoken out, and *Elihu* had stayd some time after, to see whether either himselfe or his friends would speak againe, then he began. Mr *Broughton* translates, *yet Elihu waited to speak with Job.* The word notes the most patient expectation, a waiting with much long-sufferance, a waiting also in much confidence, as reserving our selves till better times, or for a more favourable dispensation. So the word is used (*Dan.* 12. 12.) *Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred, and five and thirty dayes*; that is, Blessed is he that waiteth out those dayes of the Prophecy there specified; he hath a stretched out patience, that waiteth to the very last

חכה *patientem expectationem sonat, qua duramus in malis, nos rebus melioribus servantes.* Bold.

last day, and to the last of that day. The word is used againe (*Habak.* 2. 3.) *If the vision* (that is, the mercy or deliverance revealed and promised) *tarry, waite for it*; that is, if it tarry beyond the time supposed by man (it never tarries beyond the time appointed by God) waite patiently for it, that is, for the accomplishment of it; yea the word imployeth a waiting, as it were, with open mouth, or gaping to receive that good which is allured by prophecy or in the promise. Such an expectation is here ascribed to *Elihu*, he waited for the issue of that great and long debate between *Job* and his three friends, or he gaped for such a solid answer as might satisfie him, and determine the Question under debate; *Now Elihu had waited till Job had spoken.*

Hence note.

First. *As it is always our duty to waite on God, so sometimes on men.*

We should waite, First, to see what men will doe for us; we should waite, Secondly, to heare what men have to say to us; we should waite for counsell, for comfort, for instruction, for conviction. We should waite, Thirdly, to see forme duty, and to doe good to men. Thus God is pleased to waite upon (his creature) man, (*Isa.* 30. 18.) *Therefore will I waite to be gracious*; As God waiteth to bestow acts of grace on man, so man should waite to performe offices of love and respect to man, or to give him advice, helpe and assistance, as his case and needs require.

Secondly, Consider *Elihu* who had waited long as a hearer, was afterwards a great speaker.

Hence note.

They that will speak to any mans case rightly, must first heare him patiently.

They must be hearers, who would be learners; *Paul* sate at the feete of *Gamaliel*, there he waited as a learner; And if they must waite as hearers, who would be learners, how much more ought they, who would be teachers, reprovers, or reformers?

Thirdly, *Elihu* waited that he might speake opportunely, or in time,

Hence note.

Due times and ſeaſons of ſpeaking muſt be obſerved and taken.

(Eccleſiaſtes 3. 7.) There is a time to ſpeak, and a time to keep ſilence. The providences of God point wiſe men to both. And uſually times of ſilence fit us for times of ſpeaking; *Every thing is beautifull in its ſeaſon*; words ſpoken in their ſeaſon, are not only more effectuall, but more beautifull, they are *like apples of gold in pictures of ſilver.* And therefore as the wiſe man gives us caution, (*Eccleſ.* 5. 2.) *Not to be raſh with our mouths to utter any thing before God*; So we ſhould not be raſh with our mouths to utter any thing before men, but well to conſider what we have to ſay, and waite our time to ſay it. The Apoſtle *James* (*Chap.* 1. 19.) would have us *ſwift to heare, ſlow to ſpeak*; and probably, the ſlower we are to ſpeak, the ſurer we ſpeake; *Haſty ſpeaking hath given men more dangerous ſtumbles and falls, then ever haſty going did.* The Prophet repreſents our Lord Jeſus Chriſt thus beſpeaking his Father as to his preparation and furniture for the exercite of his Prophetical, yea of his whole Mediatoriall office (*Iſa.* 50. 4.) *Thou haſt given me the tongue of the learned that I might know how to ſpeake a word in ſeaſon.* As there is much wiſdome in hitting the matter what to ſpeak, and the manner of ſpeaking, how to cloath and dreſſe the matter of our ſpeech; ſo there is much wiſdome in hitting the time and ſeaſon when to ſpeake. And as to time a thing well in acting, ſo to time it well in ſpeaking, is the better halfe of it. *Elihu waited till Job had ſpoken.* What I have now touched, may be one reaſon of his waiting; But the ſpeciall reaſon of it follows in the text.

Becauſe they were elder then he; and good reaſon that he ſhould waite upon his elders.

זקן *ſignificat non tantum ſenem ſed ſenii conſilium, & non tantum ſenem ætate ſed ſapientia.*

The Hebrew is, *They were elder for dayes*; they were not only *old men for dayes, but elder for dayes then he*; The word, ſtrictly taken, imports a man more then old, even one that is worne with age. Further, it denotes a two-fold elderſhip; Firſt, an elderſhip in time, dayes or yeares. Secondly, an elderſhip in wiſdome, and underſtanding. *They are our elders indeed, who are wiſer then we*; *elderſhip in time deſerves reſpect, but elderſhip in wiſdome commands it.* And as ſuch are expreſt by this word in the Hebrew, ſo both the *Grecians* and *Romans* expreſſe their wiſe men by a.

a word of the ſame force; *Senators* were elders, not alwayes in time (there was no Law much leſſe neceſsity that every Senator ſhould be an old man) but in underſtanding: every Senator ought to be a wiſe man, though not an old man. They who are to governe others wiſely, had need be furniſhed with wiſdome themſelves. Gray haires alone cannot make a good Magiſtrate. We read the word applyed both to Church-Elders called (*Iſa.* 37. 2.) *The Elders of the Prieſts*, and to State-Elders, called Elders of the people (*Exod.* 17. 5.) or of the Land (*Gen.* 50. 7.) *The Elders of the Land of Egypt went with them.* 'Tis ſaid (*Pſal.* 105. 21, 22.) *Pharoah made Joſeph Lord of his houſe, and ruler of all his ſubſtance, to binde his Princes at his pleaſure, & teach his Senators wiſdome.* Young *Joſeph* made *Pharaohs* wiſe men wiſer, and gave counſel to his counſellers. Here *Elihu* calls *Jobs* friends *Elders*, and we may take him either ſpeaking ſtrictly, that they were his Elders in time, or ſpeaking modeſtly, that they were his Elders in wiſdome, knowledge, and underſtanding, and therefore he was not haſty to ſpeake, but gave them their ſcope, waiting till *Job* had ſpoken, *Becauſe they were elder then he.*

Hence note, Firſt in General.

Young men ſhould ſhew reſpect and waite upon their Elders.

The Apoſtle would not have *Timothy* ſlighted, though young, (1 *Tim.* 4. 12.) *Let no man deſpiſe thy youth*; He chargeth the people not to deſpiſe *Timothy* becauſe young; and he chargeth *Timothy* to carry it ſo, that none might have the ſhew of a cauſe to deſpiſe him though young; *Let no man deſpiſe thy youth*; let not thoſe that ſeeke occaſion finde it. Now, as young men, eſpecially young Miniſters ſhould be ſo holy and grave in their converſation, as not to draw diſreſpect or contempt upon themſelves, and as no man ought to deſpiſe the young meerly becauſe they are young; ſo all men ought to honour old age. The old Law was expreſſe for it (*Levit.* 19. 32.) *Thou ſhalt riſe up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and feare thy God, I am the Lord.* See, how theſe two are joyned together, *Thou ſhalt honour the face of the old man, and feare thy God*; As if he had ſaid, honour old men in the feare of God, or ſhew feare to God in the reverence and honour which thou giveſt to old men, who having lived a long time or many dayes in the world,

world, bear at leaſt a ſhadow of the eternity of God who is *The ancient of dayes*, who lives and abides for ever. There is a two-fold ſtampe of God upon old men, more then upon other men. Firſt their very age hath a ſtamp of God upon it, for though all ages put together, are not a moment to eternity, yet, as to our computation and reckoning, old age beares the faireſt image of eternity: Secondly, old men bear a reſemblance of God in their wiſdome, ('tis to be ſuppoſed that the oldeſt are wiſeſt, as *Elihu* ſpeaks v. 7.) So then old men are to be reverenced not only for their precedence in time, but for their experience, wiſdome, knowledge and prudence, all which repreſent them more like to God then younger men.

Senes venit a ſine ab omnis.

Secondly, Look to the ſpeciall way wherein *Elihu* ſhewed reverence to his Elders, even by his long ſilence; he did not rudely nor raſhly breake into diſcourſe, but waited till they had done. This modeſty of *Elihu* is both commendable and imitable, who would ſay nothing as longe as *Job* or any of his friends had any thing to ſay, becauſe they were elder then he. As the light of nature teacheth reverence to the aged in all caſes, ſo more particularly, in this. There ſhines (as to this poynt an admirable comlineſſe in the diſputes of the Ancients, and a moſt eminent example of order inviolably kept both in propoſing and anſwering. Their rule or maxime was, *Let the Seniors ſpeake, let the Juniors hear. Let Old men teach, let young men learne.* It is the note of a learned Commentator upon this place from what himſelfe had obſerved. Living (ſaith he) once at *Paris* in *France*, where, in a Monaſtery, *three Indians* were brought up and inſtructed in the Chriſtian Religion, I could not but admire to behold how ſtudiouſly, and ſtrictly they kept to the Lawes of ſpeaking, the younger not offering a word till the Elder had done; The practice of theſe *Indians* brought with them out of Heatheniſme may reprove the imprudence of many, yea the impudence of ſome young men among us, who will be firſt in talk, when their betters and elders are in place; The Prophet threatned this as a great judgment (*Iſa.* 3. 5.) *The Child ſhall behave himſelf proudly againſt the Ancient.* The child is not to be taken here ſtrictly, but for any inferiour in age, though poſſibly himſelfe be arrived to the ſtate of manhood. As if the Prophet had ſaid, there ſhall be a generall confuſion among all degrees of men, without reſpect had to age or place

Mira in hoc elucet antiquitatem in publicis concertationibus gravitas et ſtupendum inviolabiliter ſervati in dicendo ac reſpondendo ordinis exemplum. Bold.

Majores natu loquantur juniores audiant: ſenes doceant, adoleſcentes diſcant; Pulcherrima diſciplinæ ſententia. Druſ.

place, every ſtripling will take the boldneſs to talk and act unſeemly before his betters. Obeyſance and ſilence, bowing the body, and holding the peace, are reſpects which ought to be paid to our Superiours whether in time or authority.

But as young men ſhould not be forward to ſpeak in the preſence of their elders, ſo they ſhould not be afraid to ſpeak when there is cauſe for it, eſpecially when their elders forbear or refuſe to ſpeak any more. Thus *Elihu* who had long kept his mouth (as *David* in another caſe did Pſal: 39. 1.) *with a bridle, and was dumb with ſilence, yet at laſt his heart was hot within him, and while he was muſing, the fire burned, and* (as it followeth) *he ſpake with his tongue.*

Verſ. 5. *When Elihu ſaw that there was no anſwer in the mouth of theſe three men, then his wrath was kindled.*

When Elihu ſaw it, that is, when he was as much aſſured of it (by their geſture and carriage) as if it had been viſible, that theſe three men had no more to ſay, or would ſay no more (for the words may be referred indifferently to their will or power, when, I ſay, he ſaw they had no more to ſay) Either, firſt, to convince *Job* of error, or ſecondly, to defend the truth of God, which they had undertaken (when he ſaw this) *his wrath was kindled*, at that inſtant time, and for that very reaſon, *his wrath was kindled*. Some conceive (as was ſhewed before) that this anger proceeded from the paſſionateneſs of his ſpirit, and ſo tax him with it as his fault; but I rather conſent with thoſe who ſay it proceeded from his zeal for God, and ſo it was his vertue and his praiſe.

I have met with theſe words two or three times already ſince I entred upon this Chapter, and therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon them here; And as this anger of *Elihu* was ſpoken of before, ſo the ſame reaſon which was given before of his anger is repeated and reported hear again; *Then his wrath was kindled becauſe they had no anſwer in their mouths*, that is, becauſe they had no more to ſay againſt *Job* whom they had condemned; and becauſe they had no more to ſay for God whoſe cauſe in afflicting *Job* they had defended; I ſhall only adde a few brief Notes upon this Verſe, and ſo paſſe on.

Firſt,

First, *Some men answer till they have no more to answer.*

'Tis very possible for a good and a wise man to be at the bottom of his reason, in some points, or to be brought to such a wall, that he can go no further; *David* saith, *I have seen an end of all perfection*, which as it is true of all outward commodities and conveniences, which men enjoy, so both of their corporal and intellectual abilities, or of what they can either do or say. The best of men may see the end of their best perfections in all things, but Grace, and the hope of Glory. Their stock and treasure may be quite spent, their spring exhausted, and they gone to their utmost line and length. There's no more answer in their mouth, nor work in their hand.

Secondly note;
It may put a wise man into passion to see how ill some wise men use their reason, or that they can make no further use of it.

Then was the anger of *Elihu* kindled when he saw, they could answer no more, or that *there was no answer in the mouth of these three men.*

Thirdly, As the anger of *Elihu* is often spoken of, so still we find some what or other is assigned as a ground of it;

Whence note;
We should see good reason for our anger before we are angry, whether in our own cause, or in the cause of God.

There is nothing can excuse anger but the cause of it. Reason is a good plea for passion; And he that hath a true reason for his anger, will probably manage his anger with reason, yea, and mingle it with grace; And so his proves not only a rational, but a gracious anger.

Fourthly note;
Provoked patience breaks out into greater passion.

In the former Verse, we find *Job* waiting, he waited long and patiently; but being disappointed of what he waited for, his wrath broke out; *His anger was kindled*; As when God waits long and is disappointed, his anger is encreased in the manifestation of it (Rom. 2. 4,5. ver:) *Despisest thou the riches of his goodnesse*

nesse and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodnesse of God leads thee to repentance? but after thy hardnesse and impenitent heart, treasurest up wrath, &c. As if he had said, the more patience God spends upon thee, the more wrath is treasured up for thee, and that wrath will break out the more fiercely and violently to consume thee, the longer it hath been treasured up. Now I say, as the wrath of God is the more declared against man, by how much his patience is the more abused; So the abused patience of man will turn to greater anger, and he groweth the more passionate by how much he hath been the more and the oftner deceived. Thus *Elihu* is still described acting angerly, yet in the very next verse we shall find him speaking soberly, plainly and to purpose.

Vers. 6. *And Elihu the son of Barachell the Buzite answered and said.*

When *Elihu* saw these three men gravel'd, and that after all the outcry they made against *Job*, they were forced to leave him as they found him, unconvinced of those crimes, of that hypocrisie, which they had layd to his charge, he hereupon saw himselfe engaged to undertake the matter and offer his opinion.

Concerning *Elihu*, his name, his fathers name, *Barachel*, his tribe or stock, a *Buzite*, I have spoken at the 2d verse, and shall not adde any thing of it here; only take notice, That here *Elihu* begins his own preface; The former part of the Chapter contained the report of the divine historian concerning *Elihu*; but these are the words of *Elihu* himselfe; here he begins like an Orator to gaine favour with and attention of his hearers, or to prepare the minds of his hearers to receive what he had to say; And upon this subject or piece of Rhetoricke (making Prefaces) he spends the whole that remaines of this Chapter. *And Elihu*, &c. *answered and said,*

I am young, and ye are very old (that is it which he said.) *therefore I was afraid and durst not shew mine opinion.*

As if he had said, *I am conscious to my selfe of the weakenesse which accompanieth youth; I very well know my own incompetency for such a worke; I am young.*

Parvus secundum dies. Heb:

The Hebrew is, *I am few of dayes*, or, *little according to dayes*; if you should reckon or measure me by dayes, I am very little; And is not every man so? If you measure any man by dayes, is not he very little? *Thou hast made my age a span long* (said *David*, Psal. 39. 7.) that's quickly measured. *Job* spake thus (*Chap.* 14. 1.) *Man that is borne of a woman, is of few dayes, and full of trouble*; He saith not, this or that man, but *man*, take old men, the Elders, take all men, the oldest men are but few of dayes in themselves considered; and comparatively to the age or rather the eternity of God, their utmost age is but as a drop to the ocean. Thus all men, even ancient men are few of dayes, which is here the description of a young man, *I am young* (saith *Elihu*) *or few of dayes*; but compare one man with another, so some have few dayes, and others many dayes; young men have few dayes, and old men have many dayes, compared with one another.

I am young,
and ye are very old.

יָשִׁישׁ *decrepitus.*

The word notes decrepid old age, the very dregs of age, the utmost line of life; old age like a heavy burden bowes the back, and criples the limbes of the strongest and stoutest sons of *Adam*. See more of this word (*Chap.* 15. 10.) There are severall divisions of the life of man, some cast it into foure parts, sutable to the foure seasons of the yeare; some into five, alluding to the Acts of an Interlude or play; others into seven, in allusion to the Planets; now what ever division you make of the life of man, this decrepid old age is the last.

Hominis ætates in septem partitur, Hippocrates
1 *Parvulus ad annum 7 mum.*
2 *Puer ad An:* 14.
3 *Adolescens ad An:* 21.
4 *Juvenis ad An:* 28.
5 *Vir ad An:* 50.
6 *Senex ad An:* 56.
7 *Decrepitus post quamdiu vivit.*

I am young, and ye are very old,
wherefore I was afraid, and durst not shew mine opinion.

What effect that sence which *Elihu* had of his youth or fewnesse of dayes produced in him, is set forth in these words; 'twas *feare*, I (saith he) *was afraid*, &c. There is, (as to this poynt) a twofold feare: First, a cowardly feare; Secondly, a modest feare; when *Elihu* saith, *he was afraid*, he doth not meane the feare of a coward; but of a modest man: it is not cowardize to be afraid of doing many things, to feare to doe those things which are unlawfull, or which are uncomely, is no part of cowardize. This latter feare surprized or rather composed *Elihu*; he

he was a man bold spirited enough, but modesty made him afraid to shew his opinion. There is a great elegancy in those words; *I durst not shew mine opinion*; They imply, he hid his speech, as Serpents hide themselves when men approach. (*Micah* 7. 17.) Serpents which are a terrour to men, and make them afraid, are also afraid of men, their appearance causeth them to run and hide their heads. The Rabbins take much paines in their Criticismes about this word to expresse a vertuous modesty. As it is a duty to be (as Christ exhorts his Disciples to be) especially in times of persecution (*Math:* 10. 10.) *wise as Serpents*, so it is a vertue to be fearefull as Serpents, even to feare as much to be heard by some men, as Serpents feare to be seene by any man. Thus *Elihu* held downe his head, he was afraid and durst not shew his opinion suddenly, nor declare his judgement in the case, for the reverence he bare to those graver and elder heads.

יָרֵא *est serpens & denotat timorem serpentum latebras quærentium & videri metuentium.* Aben-Ezra.

Reptilium more dimissi sus; unde vulgatus reddit, Demisso capite veritus sum. Drus:

Note hence.

First, *Young men are apt to run into mistakes, their heat usually exceeds their light.*

Youth drives furiously, and commonly carrieth presumption with it, or is it selfe hurried by presumption. Though God hath given a young man a good understanding, quick parts, and a ready tongue, yet he wants much, because he hath not seene much, and so is very liable to miscarriage. He cannot look through, nor see to the end of things; for as it is the great and sole priviledge of God to cast an eye quite through all intermediate, both actions and revolutions, and to see the end from the beginning: so it is more peculiar to those that are aged and long experienced, to see much of the end of things in their beginnings, or to see what is like to be as well as what is. 'Tis the part of a wise man to consider what may come, and whether things tend; there is much weakness and deficiency in young men as to this. As most young men want sences exercised (as the Apostle speakes of all un-improved Christians of what age soever (*Heb:* 5. 19.) as I say, most young men want sences exercised) to discerne what is good or evill; so they want sences exercised to discerne what good or evill is like to be, they rarely see effects in their causes, or events in their prognosticks. Therefore *Elihu* might well say, *I am young, therefore I durst not venture to shew mine opinion.*

Paul giveth *Timothy* somewhat a strange warning (2 *Tim.* 2. 22.) *Flee youthfull lusts. Timothy* was young, but was he noted for indulgence to any youthfull lusts? what lusts doth he meane? surely not drunkennesse, nor uncleannesse, nor any loose behaviour; for though the most sober and temperate young men, have in them the seed of all these, yea of every lust, yet *Timothy* at that time was a pattern, a mirrour, not only of sobriety, but of holinesse; and *Paul* was even forced to bid him take more liberty in the use of the creature, then he used to allow himselfe; *Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomack sake, and for thy often infirmities.* Surely *Timothy* was a man that fled such youthfull lusts fast and far enough when he drank nothing but water, and must be bid to drink a little wine (1 *Tim.* 5. 23.) What lusts then were they which *Timothy* was exhorted to flee? the words following (*ver.* 23,24,25.) seeme to cleare it; that because he was young, he should take heed of rushing into unnecessary Questions and disputes, which young men are apt to doe in the heat of their spirits; nor are there any lusts of the lower or sensuall appetite, to which the heart of man is more intemperately and vainely carried out, then to those of the understanding; and therefore the Apostle counsels *Timothy* to *avoid unprofitable Questions, knowing that these gender strife*; (Those Questions cannot promote faith in or holinesse towards God, which only stirre up and foment strife among men) *and the servants of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle to all, and patient.* These vertues, and graces, are opposed chiefely to the youthfull lusts which *Paul* exhorts *Timothy* to take heed of; As if he had said, *Be not too hot-headed and hasty (as young men are very apt to be) in pursuing of controversies and entangling thy selfe in the thickets of Opinionists. Elihu* was of an excellent temper, who, because young, was afraid and durst not shew his opinion.

Secondly, Note.

It is good to feare, and suspect our own judgements, or, *to feare that we may erre, they seldome doe or speak amisse who feare they may.*

An over-confidence of being in the right, hath setled many in a wrong way; to be under a sence of our **readinesse to fall**, preserves us from falling, (*Hosea* 13. 1.) ***When Ephraim spake trembling, then, he exalted himselfe***; There are severall sences given of that place, but according to our translation, the meaning is carried thus; When *Ephraim* was in an humble frame, and jealous of himselfe, not confident, nor over-bold (as some are who presume to carry all before them) when he spake trembling, or did even tremble to speake, then he did that which tended to his own advancement and exaltation. This gracious trembling doth at once settle us the faster, and rayse us the higher in the wayes and things of God. *It is a high point of wisdome to have low apprehensions of our selves*; though that be true, *You shall be esteemed of others, as you esteem your selves*; *If a man under-value himselfe others will*; *yet*, 'tis best erring on that hand; *Let the price be much too low, rather then any thing too high, when you are occasioned to put a value upon or rate your selves.*

Tanti erit alijs quanti tibi fueris.

Againe, Consider what an excellent speaker *Elihu* was when he came to it, as will appeare hereafter, yet see how he stood trembling, he durst not speake, nor offer his opinion.

Hence note.

Usually they who have most ability to speak, are most backward to speak, or sparing of speech.

They are not easily brought to it, who have it in them; The belly of *Elihu* was as full with matter, as an Egge with meate or a bottle with wine; yet how slow was he in opening himselfe? They who are and have least are most desirous, if not ambitious, to appeare most, and would make up in seeming what they are not in being. As *Elihu* in this verse hath shewed himselfe afraid to say any thing, so he shewes us in the next, who, he hoped, would have said all, and altogether have saved him a labour.

Vers. 7. *I said, dayes should speak, and multitude of yeares should teach wisdome;*

Or, as the text may be rendred, *let dayes speak*; dayes shall not be hindred by me from speaking, let dayes speak their fill. But what meaneth he, when he saith, *let dayes speak?* how can dayes speak; 'tis an elegancy in Rhetorick, when that which belongs to a person, is ascribed to a thing, as here speech to time, *let dayes speak*; that is, let those who number many dayes, who have lived and

Loquantur dies *sunt enim verba permittentis* q.d. *sinam loqui illos, non præripiam eis loquendi locum.* Pisc:

and seene many dayes, let them speak; they who have lived most dayes on earth, are yet indeed (as *Bildad* told *Job*, Chap. 8. 9.) *but of yesterday*, and so have lived, as it were, but a day; yet, according to common account, some men are so very old, that you may call them *dayes*, and to them we may well say, *let Dayes speak*. We read of one who was called *John of Times*, because he had lived (if the Records spake true) three hundred yeares and more. An old man is a man of dayes; and thus *Elihu* might say, let dayes, that is, *old men speak*.

Johannes de Temporibus.

But Children can speak, why then doth he say, *dayes should speak?* I answer; There is a twofold speaking; First, naturall, thus Children, as soone as they are out of their swadling-bands, learne to speak; such speaking is but a naturall act; Secondly, There is a speaking which is an artificiall or studied act; thus Orators and men of eloquence speake; such speaking *Elihu* intended when he sayd, *dayes should speak*; *He looked they should speak to purpose*, speak by rule, even the quintessence of reason; he presumed they would have brought forth somewhat worthy of their yeares, and that he should have received such instruction from them, as they had learned from old age it selfe; *I sayd dayes should speak*. Children can speak words, but old men should speak things, every word should have its weight; their tongues should drop as the honey-combe, and be a tree of life to feed and refresh many. It is most truly said of the word of God in Scripture, *Every tittle of it hath a mountaine of sence*, a mighty weight of truth in it; And surely the words of old men should be weighty and convincing; They should speak truth with such evidence both of testimony and reason as may put to silence all those who speak against or besides either truth or reason. As, *day unto day* (saith *David*, Psal. 19. 2.) *uttereth speech*, that is, every day speakes somewhat; so *men of dayes* should speak much both for instruction and conviction. *I said dayes should speak.*

Hence note.

That's not to be esteemed as done at all, which is not well done, or not done to purpose.

An old man doth not speak unlesse he speaks wisely, edifyingly, and to the poynt. The aged speak like children, when they speak foolishly, or unfruitfully. He only is a good speaker, who speaks

speaks that which may doe others good, or make them better. We say proverbially and truly both of saying and doing, *As good never a whit, as never the better.*

I said dayes should speak,
and multitude of yeares should teach wisdome.

Elihu reckons the age of aged men, by *multitude of yeares*; this he doth only to highten the matter; what wisdome might he not expect from a multitude of yeares? that is, from such as had lived a multitude of yeares. Certainly thought *Elihu*, they *will*

Teach wisdome.

There is a twofold wisdome; First, that which is meerely rationall; Secondly, that which is spirituall; or there is first, a common; secondly, an holy wisdome; *Elihu* expected wisdome of both sorts, but chiefely of the latter, from multitude of yeares. He expected they would teach the wisdome which the Spirit of God had taught them; that wisdome which consists in the true knowledge of God and of our selves, that wisdome which is from above, that which man hath not from himselfe, nor is taught him by dayes or yeares, by use or experience only. And it was very probable, that they who from their youth had been instructed in the things of God, being growne old, should also be growne further in this wisdome, and riper in this sort of knowledge. And therefore *Elihu* spake according to the rule of right reason, when he judged that those three aged men had attained to a very high degree of divine light. Such is the goodnesse of God to his people, that usually they grow in grace and knowledge as they grow in yeares; For though God is Debtor to no man (but Creditor to all men) and though old age in it selfe considered, deserves nothing of God, yea is not only undeserving, but (because sin multiplyes as our dayes doe) ill deserving, yet as Christ saith, *To him that hath*, (that is, who useth and improveth what he hath) *more shall be given*; And therefore though true wisdome be a free gift, and is infused and wrought by the Spirit of God, yet we may in probability, and ought according to charity, judge, that they who have most dayes, have also most wisdome. Though wisdome be not entayled upon old age, yet there we are most likely to finde it. *I sayd multitude of yeares should teach wisdome.*

Sapientiam intelligit, quæ in vera dei & nostra cognitione sita est; cujus author sit spiritus dei, non hominis animus, non anni, non usus, non experientia. Merl.

Hence

Hence obſerve firſt.

We may well expect they ſhould be very wiſe, and knowing, who have had much meanes, and many opportunities of obtaining knowledge and wiſdome.

And therefore we have reaſon to expect much wiſdome from thoſe who have had a multitude of yeares paſt over their heads; It is a common rule in Logick, *When ſufficient cauſes are put in act, the effect muſt needs follow*; And ſo where probable cauſes are in act, probably the effect will follow. Old men having been well brought up in youth, and having had faire opportunities to attaine knowledge and wiſdome, are rightly preſumed and judged well ſtor'd and ſtockt with both. Where ſhall we finde wiſdome, if not among the Ancients? where, if not among a multitude or throng of yeares and dayes? where elſe ſhould we look for it? ſhall we goe and enquire among the greene heads and young beginners for it? ſhall we goe to novices and children for it? We may ſay, ſurely they who have been long taught, have learned much, ſurely they who have heard many ſoule-ſearching Sermons, and continued from day to day under the droppings of divine truths, are full of fruit and very fruitfull; whether ſhall we goe for fruit elſe, if not to theſe? ſhall we goe to thoſe that live as upon the mountaines of *Gilboa*, where *David* prayed no raine might fall? ſhall we goe for Goſpel-fruit to the *wild* naked untaught *Indians* and *Barbarians*, or to the rightly inſtituted and plentifully inſtructed Churches of Chriſt? may we not more then ſay, conclude, ſurely theſe are wiſe, and full of ſpirituall underſtanding? The Roman Orator *Cicero* took it for granted that his ſon *Marcus* was well grounded in and plentifully furniſhed with the principles of Philoſophy, becauſe he had been at *Athens* a whole yeare, and there heard *Cratippus* a famous Philoſopher read many excellent Lectures about things natural and morall. And may we not ſay to many thouſands of Goſpel-hearers and profeſſors, what? you that have heard ſuch, and ſuch able Miniſters, you that have had the word ſo long preached, and that at *London* (more famous for Goſpel knowledge, then *Athens* for philoſophy) ſurely you are filled with all knowledge in the myſtery of Chriſt, and with all goodneſſe in the practice of godlineſſe. And doubtleſſe, the Lord will argue it with thoſe that have had

Cauſis ſufficientibus poſitis in actu neceſſario ſequitur effectus.

Quanquam te Marce Fili Annum jam audientem Cratippum idq; Athenis abundare oportet præceptis inſtitutiſq; philoſophiæ, &c. Cic: de Offi: lib. 1.

had time and opportunities, as a rich price in their hand to get wiſdome, as *Elihu* did with his friends being aged men. Who can imagine, but that they are full of wiſdome, that they abound in knowledge and ſpirituall underſtanding, who abounding in dayes and yeares, have abounded alſo in meanes of knowledge.

Note Secondly.

As old men ſhould abound in knowledge, ſo they ſhould approve themſelves ready to teach the ignorant.

I ſaid dayes ſhould ſpeak, and multitude of yeares ſhould teach wiſdome. 'Tis a duty incumbent upon them who have learned much, to teach much. To conveigh wiſdome and knowledge to others is moſt proper to ſuch, as well as moſt ornamental, and honourable. To be knowing our ſelves is a great mercy, and to helpe others to the knowledge of what we know is a great duty; to looſe one ſpeciall end of knowing, if we know only for our ſelves. To communicate and diffuſe our knowledge to others is the nobleſt way of uſing it, and the beſt way of improving it, and that in a double reſpect; Firſt, it is the beſt way of improving it, as to encreaſe; Secondly, it is the beſt way of improving it, as to reward. The more we give out our knowledge, the more we ſhall have of it, and the more we ſhall have for it both from God and men. The Apoſtle ſaith of a Goſpel Miniſter (1 *Tim.* 3. 2.) *He muſt be apt to teach*, not only able, but apt, that is, ready and willing to teach; now what the Apoſtle ſpeaks there of an Elder by office, is true of thoſe that are elders in time, they alſo ſhould be apt to teach; not only able, but ready and willing to teach in and according to their ſpheare and power. *I ſaid dayes ſhould ſpeak*, &c.

Thirdly, Note.

'Tis a reproach to old age, not to be knowing and wiſe, not to be able and apt to teach wiſdome.

That old age is venerable, not which hath white hayre, but which whiteneth with vertuous and worthy actions; *Elihu* ſpeaks here, not only narratively but reprovingly, he reflects upon the ancient, whoſe abilities come not up to or doe not equall their yeares. The aged may well bluſh and be aſhamed to be found ignorant of, or unskilfull' in any thing that they ought to know.

Senectus illa venerabilis eſt, non quæ canis ſed meritis alba ſcit. Ambro: lib: 7. Epiſt. 70.

The Apostle shames the *Hebrewes* with this, *and tells them they were dull of hearing* (Heb. 5.) *because when for the time they ought to be teachers, they had need that one should teach them againe which be the first principles of the oracles of God, and were become such as had need of milke and not of strong meate*; As if he had said, When for the time, dayes, and yeares, which have gone over your heads, (the reproofe lyes there) you should be able to teach others, what a shame is it that you your selves should not be capable of those higher teachings, which he calls *strong meat*, but must be dealt with about the very principles of Religion, and be fed like Children with milke and spoones? How is it that you who should have had *senses exercised to discerne both good & evill*, should be to little able to distinguish them, either in their kinds or degrees. These were spiritually Children, while naturally old men; They had not learned of their teachers, when the Apostle had reason to hope they had been able to teach learners, yea w[illegible] learned teachers. Some are exceeding old, & exceeding ignorant, they have multitude of dayes upon them, yet if asked, they are not able to hold forth the least Number of divine truths, possibly not one in a right understanding; *As gray haires are a crowne of glory when found in the way of righteousnes*, so gray haires are crowns of glory, when found in a way of wisdome, knowledge, and understanding, otherwise to be old and dotish, old and sottish, how dishonorable is it! yea, they that are old and ignorant, shall at last finde their old age, a strong aggravation, as of all their sins, so especially of their ignorance.

JOB,

JOB. Chap. 32. Vers. 8, 9.

But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.
Great men are not alwayes wise, neither doe the aged understand judgement.

Elihu, as was shewed in the former words, having in vaine waited for the wisdome of the Ancient, proceeds in this Context to give the reason why the Ancient are not alwayes wise.

Vers. 8. *There is a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding.*

There's the reason of it; we render the first word of this eight verse by the Adversative particle (*But*) *there is a spirit in man*; it is usually rendered by the Affirmative particle, *verily*, truly, or indeed. Mr *Broughton* saith, *Certes a spirit is in sad man.*

These is some difference in opinion about this *spirit* affirmed to be in man. Divers expound *Elihu* intending the Spirit of God; *there is a spirit*; that is, the divine Spirit, the holy Spirit of God, or God the Spirit is in man. One of the Greek translations puts it into the text; *Surely the Spirit of God is in man*; and the Chaldee paraphrase gives it in a like expression; *Surely there is a prophetick spirit in the son of man*, or, *in the sons of men*. Some are induced to this interpretation, because it would be (say they) but a cold argument to commend what he had to say for the rectifying *Job*, by telling him that man hath a reasonable soule, which is common to all men. Yet I rather conceive that in this first part of the verse, the spirit spoken of is the naturall spirit of man, which in the latter part of the verse he affirmes is instructed, by the inspiration of the Almighty, with supernatural light for speciall services. The word is often used in Scripture to note the reasonable soule, or those powers of the soule which are the vessells of reason, or in which naturall reason hath its seate and exercise. There is a power of reasoning in man, or a spirit which is able to discourse of all things; there was such a naturall power im-

ὄντως δὲ πνεῦμα θεῖόν ἐστιν ἐν ἀνθρώποις. Symmach.

רוח *animam rationalem denotat.*

implanted in man at his Creation, and though that power be much weakned and broken by the fall, yet there are, to this day, ſome remaines of it in all men as borne into this world; *Surely there is a ſpirit in man*; And becauſe the word is univerſall, or extendable to all men, therefore it is more then probable the word *ſpirit* here is to be taken in the largeſt ſence; for every man hath not the Spirit of God: yea the word here uſed for man, notes man of the meaneſt ranke or loweſt forme; ſurely there is a ſpirit (in *enoſh* Mr *Broughton* tranſlates) *in ſad man*, in ſickly man, in weak man, in the ſickleſt weakeſt and loweſt of men there is a ſoule, a ſpirit indued with reaſon; this is, as the *ſubſtratum* or ground of the whole buſineſſe, *Surely there is a ſpirit in man*. And in the latter part of the verſe, *Elihu* ſheweth what that is which heightneth raiſeth and improveth this naturall ſpirit, certainly there is a ſpirit in man, every man hath a reaſonable ſoule.

And the inſpiration of the Almighty giveth underſtanding.

ineſt quidem hominibus vis illa rationatrix ſed quæ niſi dei afflatu dirigatur, verè ſapere non poteſt. Bez.

נשמת שדי a נשם anhelavit.

The worke of God inlightning man is expreſſed by *breathing*; when Jeſus Chriſt gave his Diſciples the Spirit, he breathed upon them, (or inſpired them) *and ſaid, receive ye the holy Ghoſt* (*Joh* 20. 22.) For, as in the firſt Creation, when God gave man a naturall being, he *breathed into his noſtrills the breath of life, and man became a living ſoule* (Gen. 2. 7.) ſo in the ſecond or new Creation God breaths a ſpirituall life into that life, and man becomes a quickned ſoule: And as his own ſoule is quickned by the holy Spirit of grace, ſo he is fitted, as an inſtrument in the hand of God, to quicken the ſoules of others with grace, or to inſtruct them in the wayes of grace.

The inſpiration of the Almighty giveth underſtanding.

But hath not the reaſonable ſoule of every man an underſtanding? Doubtleſſe it hath. Therefore I anſwer; The underſtanding may be taken two wayes; Firſt, for the faculdie; Secondly, for the furniture and enrichings of it; now though every man hath an underſtanding, yet every man hath not a furniſhed and an enriched underſtanding, a beautified and an adorned underſtanding. The Scripture ſpeakes of ſome men as if they were nothing but underſtanding (*Prov.* 1. 5.) *A wiſe man will increaſe knowledge, and a man of underſtanding will attaine unto all Counſell*; Every man hath an underſtanding, but every man is not *a man of underſtanding*; every man is not a man of underſtanding in naturall and civill things, much leſſe in things divine and ſpirituall. As ſome men have ſo much will, or rather wilfulneſſe, that they are nothing but will; and ſome have ſo much paſſion, that they are nothing but paſſion; ſo others have ſuch riches and treaſures of underſtanding, as if they were nothing but underſtanding. Now, it is the ſpeciall inſpiration of the Almighty which giveth ſuch an underſtanding; that is, an enlarged and an enriched underſtanding. We ſay, *the inſpiration of the Almighty giveth underſtanding.*

The Hebrew is but one word, which we may expreſſe as ſome doe, It *Intellectifieth*. So then, the ſcope and meaning of this verſe is plainly this; That howſoever every man, the meaneſt of men, hath a reaſonable ſoule, yet the furniture of the underſtanding, or mans fulneſs of wiſdome and knowledge is by gift or inſpiration of the Almighty; and therefore ſome read the verſe thus; *Surely there is a ſpirit in man, but the inſpiration of the Almighty maketh them to underſtand.* Thus *Elihu* would gaine credit and authority to what he had to deliver, as being by the teachings and dictates of the Spirit of God. The Seventy comply fully with this rendering; *There is a ſpirit in men, but the inſpiration of the Almighty teacheth*; As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *Though man be endewed with naturall knowledge and reaſon, which can doe ſomewhat, yet untill light ſhines from above, till the ſpirit of God comes in and enlargeth the naturall ſpirit, it cannot ſee farre, nor doe any great matter.* Or take the ſence of the whole verſe thus, in connection with what went before; *Though old age hath odds of youth, yet one man as well as another hath a ſpirit of reaſon and judgement in him, whereby through ſupply of ſpeciall inſpiration from God (who can doe all things) he may be able to know that which want of yeares denieth him.* From the words thus opened,

תבינם *Intellectificat eos.* Brent.

Eſt ſpiritus in hominibus, ſpiratio autem omnipotentis docet. Sept.

Obſerve, Firſt.

Wiſdome or underſtanding is the gift of the Spirit of God.

We have a like aſſertion by way of queſtion in the 38th Chapter of this booke (*ver.* 36.) *Who hath put wiſdome into the inward*

ward parts, or who hath given understanding to the heart? who hath? hath man put wisdome into himselfe? or hath he made his own heart to understand? the Question denies, no, man hath not done it. Wisdome is an Influence or an Inspiration from the Almighty; knowledge to order common things is of the Lord (*Isa.* 28. 26, 29.) *His God doth instruct him* (the husbandman he meanes) *to discretion* (in ordering the ground) *and doth teach him*; how much more in spirituall things and the mysteries of the kingdome of heaven. (*Prov.* 16. 1.) *The preparation of the heart in man, and the Answer of the tongue* (that is, The fitting of the heart for any right answer of the tongue) *is from the Lord*; both the generall preparation of the heart for service or use, and the speciall preparation of it to this or that service & use is of the Lord, & so is the Answer of the tongue for the discharge of it. (*Eccles.* 2. 26.) *God giveth to a man that is good in his sight, wisdome and knowledge and joy*; As God giveth man the knowledge of things, so wisdome to know how to order and manage the things that he knoweth; Some have more knowledge then they know how to manage, their knowledge masters them, they are not masters of their knowledge; they have more knowledge then wisdome. Now God gives to him that is good in his sight (that is, to the man whom he chooseth and is pleased with) knowledge and wisdome; and then he gives him joy, that is, Comfort in the exercise of that knowledge wherewith he is endued; this is a notable and a noble gift of God. We read (*Isa.* 11. 2.) *The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdome and understanding*; It is a prophesie of Christ, who being made in all things like to man, had a naturall spirit, or a reasonable faculty, and he had that furnished by the spirit without measure; the spirit of the Lord rested upon him, *the spirit of wisdome and understanding, the spirit of Counsell and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the feare of the Lord*; even Christ as man received an unction or inspiration from the Almighty for the fullfilling of his Mediatoriall office; much more doe meere men for the fulfilling of any office they are called unto. (2 *Cor.* 3. 5.) *We are not sufficient of our selves so much as to thinke a good thought*; Our sufficiency is by the Inspiration of the Almighty. (*James* 1. 17.) *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above*; It is not a vapour that riseth out of the earth, but an Influence which distills

stills and drops down from God, who though he be every where even above: that is, [illegible] his essentiall presence, yet (according to Scripture language) his most glorious and manifestative presence is *above*; and therefore to say, every good gift is from above, is all one as to say, it is from God. *Daniel* and those other three Noble youths of the Jewish race exceeded all the wise men of *Chaldea* in rare abilities, and the Scripture tells us, whence it was, that they did so. (*Dan.* 1. 17.) *As for these foure Children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdome*; and the assertion is layd downe in General (*Dan.* 2. 21.) *He* (that is, God) *changeth times and seasons, he removeth Kings and setteth up Kings, he giveth wisdome to the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding*; All these Scriptures speak with one Consent the language of this Text, *It is the Inspiration of the Almighty that giveth understanding*. And if we compare 1 *Sam:* 10. 1. with the 6th 9th 11th and 12th verses of the same Chapter, we have a most remarkable passage to this purpose. Where *Saul* having received the unction from *Samuel*, both as an assurance of and a preparation for the exercise of his kingly office over *Israel*; *Samuel* tells him (*ver.* 6.) *The Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophecy with them* (that is, with the company of Prophets spoken of in the former verse) *and shalt be turned into another man*. And the holy text adds (*ver.* 9.) *God gave* (or as we put in the margin *turned*) *him another heart*. There is a twofold turning or changing of the heart, or of a man into another man. First, by gifts of Illumination; Secondly, by the grace of Sanctification; the great change of the heart is that change, of Conversion, by the grace of Sanctification; *Saul* was not turned into another man, nor had he another heart, as changed by Grace (for he shewed still his old heart in his new kingly state) but he had *another heart*, or he was another man as changed by gifts; the spirit of the Almighty gave him understanding for the Government which he was called to; for whereas before he had only a private spirit, taken up about cattel and the affaires of husbandry, then God gave him a spirit of prudence and valour, a spirit of wisdome and magnanimity, a Noble and an Heroicall Spirit, befitting the Governour of so great and populous a kingdome, both in peace and warre. Every Calling is a mystery, much more

Tu regere imperio populos Romane memento, hæ tibi erunt artes---

to Imperiall *Rome*; *Doe thou remember to Rule Nations and Kingdomes, let theſe be thy arts*; This Art the Spirit of the Lord gave *Saul*, even knowledge and skill to rule and governe; yea he had a gift of Illumination, not only for government, but for propheſie, he was found amongſt the Prophets; and when (*v.* 11th) they asked (wondering) *Is Saul alſo amongſt the Prophets*; As if they had ſaid, How ſtrange and unheard of a thing is this, that *Saul* ſhould be furniſhed with the gift of prophecy, and joyne himſelfe with the Prophets? They who before were acquainted with his perſon and manner of education, were even amazed at the ſight; And while they were ſurprized with this amazement, *one of the ſame place* (as it ſeemes writer then the reſt) *Anſwered and ſaid, but who is their father?* (ver. 12.) That's the ſpeciall word, for which I alledge this text. What? *Saul* among the Prophets! is it not ſtrange that he ſhould be Inſpired! *Then one Anſwered and ſaid, who is their father?* As if he had ſaid, Doe not any longer ſtand wondering at this thing, but conſider who is the father of *Saul* as a Propher, as alſo the father of all theſe Prophets. *Saul* was the ſon of *Kiſh* as to naturall deſcent, but he had another father as he was a Prophet, and ſo all theſe Prophets, had (beſides their Fathers as men) one and the ſame father as Prophets. Therefore wonder not that ye heare *Saul* prophecying, for all theſe whom ye heare and ſee prophecying, have not theſe gifts by birth from men, nor by induſtry from themſelves, but from God who is a free agent, and inſpireth whom he pleaſeth. The ſame God who, by inſpiration, hath freely beſtowed thoſe gifts upon the other Prophets, hath alſo inſpired *Saul* with a gift of prophecy. The Spirit of God is his father (in that capacity) as well as the father of theſe other Prophets. And hence that Scripture runs in the plurall number, *who is their father?* Unleſſe God give power from above, the underſtanding is darke, the memory unfaithfull, the tongue ſtammering; It is light from on high that teacheth the skill of prophecy. *Solomon* had the greateſt meaſure of underſtanding of any meere man ſince the fall of man, and of him it is ſaid, (1 *Kings* 4. 29.) *God gave Solomon wiſdome and underſtanding exceeding much, and largeneſſe of heart, even as the ſand that is on the ſea-ſhore. Solomons* heart had been as narrow as another mans, if the Inſpiration of the Almighty had not widened

widened it. When *Moſes* was ſo ſinfully modeſt, as to excuſe his Embaſſie to *Pharoah*, ſuppoſing himſelfe not fitted for ſuch an undertaking (*Exod.* 4. 10, 11.) *O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore nor ſince thou haſt ſpoken unto thy ſervant, but I am ſlow of ſpeech, and of a ſlow tongue.* God preſently put the queſtion to him, *Who hath made mans mouth?* &c. As if he had ſaid, Cannot he give words into thy mouth, who gave thee a mouth? cannot he act thy organs of ſpeech who made them? *Now therefore goe and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou ſhalt ſay.* The Inſpiration of the Almighty ſhall give thee underſtanding. Heathen Poets have boaſted of their raptures and inſpirations. The people of God have a promiſe of the Spirit to lead them into all truth, and to helpe them in maintaining thoſe truths.

Eſt deus in nobis, ſunt et commercia cæli, ſedibus ætheriis ſpiritus iſte venit. Ovid.

From this generall, that the furniture of the underſtanding is the gift of God, or by Inſpiration of the Almighty, take theſe hints by way of Coralary.

First, If a right underſtanding flow from the Inſpiration of the Almighty, then pray for an underſtanding, pray for the Spirit; *Ye have not becauſe ye aske not*, ſaith the Apoſtle (*James* 4. 2.) God gives wiſdome, but he gives it to them that aske it (*Jam:* 1. 5.) *If any man want wiſdome, let him ask it of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not.* God upbraideth us not, either with our want of wiſdome, or with the abundance of wiſdome that he is pleaſed to ſupply us with, and give out to us. When *Solomon* was put to his choice what to aske, he ſaid, *Give thy ſervant an underſtanding heart.* God gave *Solomon* wiſdome, but *Solomon* asked it firſt. All good things are ſhut up in promiſes, and the promiſes are opened to give out their good things, when we pray. (*Prov.* 23. 5.) *When thou Cryeſt after knowledge, and lifteſt up thy voyce for underſtanding, then ſhalt thou underſtand the feare of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. To pray well is to ſtudie well*, becauſe by prayer light comes in from on high to make ſtudies ſucceſsfull, and the worke to proſper in our hand. As the Almighty breatheth downe on us, ſo we muſt breath up to the Almighty. To expect and not to pray, is to tempt God, not to truſt him.

Secondly, Doe not onely pray for wiſdome, but uſe meanes, and be induſtrious for the obtaining of it; *The gift of God doth*

not take off the diligence of man. God doth not worke in us that we should sit still. (*Prov.* 2. 4.) *Then shalt thou know wisdome when thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasure.* And where is this treasure to be had? Surely in the mines of Scripture, and in all those Appoyntments wherein God hath promised to meete his people, to shine upon them and give them the knowledge of his wayes in Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, Be thankfull for any gift of knowledge; for every beame and ray of light be thankfull; It is God who commands light to shine out of darknesse, and that God who at first commanded light to shine out of darknesse, dayly shineth into our hearts, *to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ,* (2 Cor. 4. 6.)

Fourthly, If understanding be from Inspiration, then they who have received much understanding, must be caution'd against two evills; First, not to be proud, nor high minded; that our gifts come from on high, should make us very low in our owne eyes. *What hast thou that thou hast not received, and if thou hast received it, why doest thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?* These are the Apostles soule-humbling and pride-mortifying questions or expostulations rather (1 Cor. 4. 7.) You that have received the greatest gifts, whom the Inspiration of the Almighty hath made most wise and understanding, be ye most humble in your selves. Secondly, let me adde (which is another dangerous rock upon which great gifts are apt to dash and split you) take heed of despising those who have received lesse; our portions are divided and allotted to us by the hand of God. Divine wisdome gives us our portion of wisdome; He that hath most, hath no more then God hath given; and he that hath least, hath as much as God is pleased to give. They despise the wisdome and question the understanding of God in giving wisdome, who despise those to whom he gives lesse wisdome and understanding then he hath given to themselves.

Fifthly, To those who have received but little, I say also two things, by way of caution; First, doe not envie those who have received much; It is of God that they have more then you, is your eye evil because the eye of God is good? Secondly, be not discontented with your own lesser portion; doe not sit downe sullen; say not, we will doe nothing with what we have received, because we

we have not as much as others: we know the doome passed on him who having but one talent hid it in a napkin. If we are discontent with a little portion, or with one talent, that little is too much, and that one too many for us; nothing doth more dim the glory of God, nor more destroy and eate out our own comforts, then discontent; the Devill, since his fall, is the most discontented spirit in the world, and he was not contented while he stood; he thought he was not high enough, & that was his undoing. They who are discontent with the gift of God, loose what is given, and so fall into deeper discontent; yea, as the Apostle speakes in another case (1 *Tim.* 3. 6.) *into the condemnation of the devill.*

Sixthly, Then, let us not be lifted up in our owne naturall wisdome and reason, he that *would be wise, must become a foole,* (1 Cor. 3. 18.) untill we see our owne wisdome folly, we cannot attaine the wisdome of God, or Godly wisdome.

Seventhly, This shews us the reason of the various kinds, and severall measures of gifts among the sons of men. Men differ not more in the measures and degrees of their outward estates, worldly riches, titles and honours, then they doe in the measures and degrees of their inward abilities, wisdome, knowledge, and understanding: men differ not more in the feature and figure of their faces, then in the furniture of their minds. One hath five talents, another two, a third but one. And as the various degrees of the same gift, so diversities of gifts are from the soveraigne pleasure of God. The Apostle is large and very distinct in this matter (1 *Cor.* 12. 4, 8, 9, 11.) *There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit; to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdome, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit, to another prophecy, to another discerning of Spirits, to another divers kinds of tongues,* &c. *But all these worketh that one and the selfe-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.* It is only the will of the Spirit, the will of God which makes this division and diversification of gifts among men And as the Apostle sheweth here the rise or spring of all to be from God, so he had shewed that the reason and intendment of all this is the benefit of men (*v.* 7.) *The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withall.* What ever your gift is God hath given it for profit and use. One hath skill in sciences, another in languages, one is more

acute, another more solid, one hath a stronger judgement, another a quicker phansie and a more searching invention, One is best at an argument to convince the understanding, another at a motive to quicken the affections; one can confute an error and state a Controversie well, and another can best discover sin, and convince the Conscience; one hath weight of matter, but is slow of speech, another hath a fluent tongue, but is lesse materiall; a third is both; but all to profit withall. Such a Character was given of those three Eminent men in the beginning of the reformation, *Luther*, *Erasmus*, and *Melanchthon*; *Luther* had matter and not words, he did not affect any exactnesse of stile or speech; *Erasmus* had words at will, but lesse weight of matter; *Melanchthon* was full in both, there was a concurrence or complication of many eminent gifts in him. The same *Erasmus*, mentioned last but one, hath a like passage in his Preface to the workes of the Ancients (which he with wonderfull skill and industry redeemed from many mistakes, and set forth more defecate and pure to the view and use of the world) where observing the different veines of divers Authors in their writings, he concludes thus; *Severall men have their severall gifts, as it pleaseth the gift giving Spirit to give to them.* In *Athanasius* we admire a serious perspicuity of speaking, and in *Chrysostome* a flowing Eloquence; in *Basil*, besides his sublimity, a pleasant language; in *Hilary* we see a lofty stile, well matcht with the loftinesse of his matter; in *Cyprian* we reverence a spirit worthy the crowne of Martyrdome; and we are in love with the sweet incentives and modesty of St *Ambrose*; In *Jerome* we commend his rich treasures of Scripture-knowledge, and must acknowledge in *Gregory* a pure and unpolisht sanctity. He shuts up thus; *Least I should be tedious*; others have, from the bounty of the same Spirit, their distinct abilities, by which they are commended to the consciences of the Godly. *The Inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding.* And as this is true with respect to the gifts of Illumination, which *Elihu* pitcheth here upon; so 'tis much more true in reference to the gifts of sanctification; The Inspiration of the Almighty giveth a spirituall understanding to know sin, and hate it, to know Christ and love him; so to know as to be conformed unto, yea transformed into that which we know. The Inspiration of the Almighty gives this understanding, *this heart-changeing and life-renewing understanding.* A-

Res sine verbis Lutherus, verba sine rebus Erasmus, res & verba Philippus.

Againe, *There is a spirit [in man] and the Inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding*; The word is *Enos*, *weake man.*

Hence Note.

God can make the weakest and the unlikeliest of men wise and full of understanding.

It is no matter what the man is, if God will use him; he can make *Enos* to be *Ish*, the weake man strong, the ignorant a learned a knowing man; *Amos* was a husbandman, and God gave him an excellent understanding; the Apostles were Fishermen, and yet the Inspiration of the Almighty made them wise above many; God can make the wise foolish, and fooles wise. The power of God triumphs over all humane power, and in all humane infirmity. So much the Apostle teacheth (1 *Cor.* 1. 27.) *God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weake things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea and things which are not, to bring to nought things which are, that no flesh should glory in his presence.* God chuseth those things which have the greatest improbility for his worke, that the power and successe of the worke may be ascribed to him alone. When we chuse, we should chuse those that are fit for the worke, to which they are chosen; we should not chuse a foole to governe, nor one that is of low parts himselfe to teach others; we should pitch upon the wisest and ablest we can get. *Joseph* said well to *Pharoah* (Gen. 41. 33.) *Looke out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the Land of Egypt.* We cannot make men wiser then they are, and therefore we must chuse and take those that are wise to doe our worke. But when God comes to doe his worke, he often takes the foolish and the weake, because as he calleth them to, so he can fit them for his worke. As the strongest opposition of nature against grace cannot hinder the worke of the Spirit; when the Spirit comes, he will make a proud man humble, a covetous man liberall, an uncleane person modest and temperate; so the weakenesse of nature cannot hinder his worke. If a man be low in parts, God can raise him; *Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength* (Psal. 8. 2.) or (as Christ alledgeth that text, *Math.*

Math: 21. 16.) *Thou haſt perfected praiſe*; one might thinke, Surely God will take the aged, the learned and great for his praiſe; no, he ordaines praiſe to himſelfe out of the mouths of babes and ſucklings, that is, out of their mouths who in all naturall conſiderations, are no way formed up nor fitted to ſhew forth his praiſe. (*Iſa.* 32. 4.) *The heart of the raſh* (or *haſty*) *ſhall underſtand knowledge.* Heady and inconſiderate perſons, whoſe tongues (as we ſay) run before their wits, ſhall then be grave, adviſed, and ſerious, both in what they doe, and (as it followeth) in what they ſay; *The tongue of the ſtammerers ſhall ſpeake plainly*, that is, cleare words with cleare reaſon; or they ſhall ſpeake well both in matter and forme, right things rightly. All this the Lord doth that he may honour himſelfe, and lift up his owne name only, which alone is to be lifted up. *Never feare to put an empty veſſell to a full fountaine*; no matter how empty the veſſell be, if the fountaine be full: God delights in broken weake and empty creatures, that he may mend, ſtrengthen, and fill them. *There is a ſpirit in man* [*in weake man*] *and the Inſpiration of the Almighty giveth them underſtanding.*

Elihu having ſhewed the original of mans wiſdome to be from God in this 8th verſe, makes an inference from it in the 9th; *The inſpiration of the Almighty giveth underſtanding*; And what then? ſurely even hence it cometh to paſſe, that,

Verſ. 9. *Great men are not alwayes wiſe, neither doe the aged underſtand Judgement.*

It is well conceived by ſome Interpreters, that the Apoſtle doth more then allude to, even cite this text (1 *Cor.* 1. 26.) *You ſee your Calling Brethren, how that not many wiſe men after the fleſh, not many mighty, not many Noble are called.* If God ſhould chuſe only or moſtly wiſe men, they would be ready to ſay, we are choſen for our wiſdome; If he ſhould chuſe and call only or moſtly rich men, they would be ready to thinke, we are choſen for our riches; If he ſhould call only or moſtly Kings and Princes, they would conclude, we are called for our Greatneſſe; Therefore the Lord paſſeth by moſt of theſe, and calleth the Fiſherman, calleth the poore man, the ignorant man, and ſaith, You that have nothing, you that (in the eſteeme of the world) are nothing, doe you follow me, who have all things, and can ſupply you with all. Thus here ſaith *Elihu*, *Great men are not alwayes wiſe*; Why not? the reaſon is becauſe God doth not alwayes beſtow wiſdome upon them, It is the Inſpiration of the Almighty that giveth underſtanding; Greatneſſe doth it not; *Not many wiſe men after the fleſh*, not many Great or Noble are Called. *Elihu* and the Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeake the ſame thing almoſt in the ſame words. This is alſo a proofe of the divine Authoritie of this booke, as well as that (1 *Cor.* 1. 19.) taken out of the ſpeech of *Eliphaz* in the 5th Chapter at the 13th verſe; *He taketh the wiſe in their owne craftineſſe*, &c.

Great men are not alwayes wiſe.

The word *alwayes* is not at all in the Originall text, and therefore put in a different Character; *Great men are not wiſe*; but 'tis well ſupplyed by that word *alwayes*; For the meaning of *Elihu* is not that great men are never wiſe, but not alwayes wiſe.

Great men, the Rabbies, the honourable men of the world, men in Authoritie and great place are intended by this word. The Officers which King *Ahaſuerus* ſet over his feaſt, are called *Rabbies* (*Eſt.* 1. 8.) ſo that we may expound it here in the largeſt ſence, as including all ſorts and degrees of Great ones.

רב *Magnus unde Rabbi Magiſter, qui multam eruditionem habet. Honorabiles Pagn: Magnates.* Tygur:

Great men are not alwayes wiſe.

That is, wiſdome neither floweth from, nor is it alwayes aſſociated with Greatneſſe. As ſome are little yet great, little in the world, yet great in true wiſdome; ſo others are Great, yet little, they are little in wiſdome, or have little true wiſdome, though they are great in the world, or have great worldly wiſdome.

Hence note.

It is not greatneſſe of birth, of place, or power, that can make any man wiſe, nor doth it at all aſſure us, that a man is wiſe, becauſe we ſee him exalted to and ſetled in a place of power and greatneſs.

The Prophet (*Jer.* 5. 4, 5.) finding ſome very incorrigible and hardned in ſinfull courſes, concluded them meane perſons, and in the loweſt forme of the people. Therefore I ſaid, *Surely theſe are poore, they are fooliſh, for they know not the way of the Lord,*

Lord, nor the Judgement of their God. To be poore and fooliſh is very common; theſe are poore and fooliſh (ſaith the Prophet) but ſurely I ſhall finde the Great ones better accommodated with wiſdome; and thereupon he reſolved, *I will get me to the great men, and will ſpeak unto them, for they have knowne the way of the Lord, and the Judgement of their God*; That is, theſe great men have had great meanes of knowledge, and we have reaſon to ſuppoſe them as great in knowledge, as they are in place or power. But did the great men anſwer his expectation? did he find that in them, which he ſought and looked for? nothing leſſe: The great men proved more fooliſh, or leſſe in true knowledge then the poore, as it followeth, *But theſe have altogether broken the yoake and burſt the bonds*; As if he had ſaid, *I thought theſe great men had been wiſe, but I ſee they are very fooles.* What can be a greater argument of folly, then to breake thoſe yoakes and bonds, which the wiſdome of God hath put upon us? 'Tis both our wiſdome and our freedome to be bound by the moſt wiſe and holy will of God; and hence the Prophet accounts this one as ſtrong as a thouſand arguments, to prove that the Great men among the *Jewes* were not wiſe, becauſe they were not only unwilling to be bound to the obedience of the will of God, but wilfully burſt thoſe bonds. When Jeſus Chriſt came into the world, the great ones, the *Rabbies* had the leaſt true wiſdome, they would not believe on him, nor receive him; yea ſome boaſted of this their unbeliefe as an argument of their wiſdome (*John* 7. 48, 49.) *Have any of the Rulers, or of the Phariſees believed on him?* No; they were too wiſe to believe; Faith in Chriſt was left to the fooles, and counted folly by thoſe wiſe men; *But this people* (ſay they, meaning the common ſort or ignorant vulgar) *who knoweth not the Law are curſed.* And they thought them accurſed becauſe they believed in and received Jeſus Chriſt, the chiefeſt bleſſing. Great men are not alwayes wiſe in civill things, very rarely in ſpirituall things; They have not alwayes the wiſdome of a man, they ſeldome have the wiſdom of a reall Chriſtian. They are not alwayes worldly wiſe, or wiſe for this preſent world, much leſſe are they alwayes wiſe for the world which is to come. *Great in title, and wiſe in truth, are a ſweete couple, but ſeldome ſeene.* If ſo

Then *there is no taking of things upon truſt from the greateſt in the*

the world. As it is dangerous to follow the multitude (*Exod.* 23. 2.) the moſt are uſually the worſt, and they who are evill, will leade to evill; ſo there is no following great ones blindfold, for even they are often blind, or (which is worſe) will not ſee; And they who either doe not or will not ſee their own way, may ſoone leade others out of the way, and turne them aſide to that which is not good.

Againe, This firſt part of the verſe (*Great men are not alwayes wiſe*) is rendred by the Septuagint, *men of many yeares, or great in yeares, are not alwayes wiſe.* The Original word may refer to greatneſſe of age, which conſiſts in having lived many yeares, as well as to greatneſſe of honour, which conſiſts in the enjoying of high places and dignities. But I rather adhere to our tranſlation, that the great men here intended are the Great in power and place, not in yeares and dayes, though it be a truth, that ſuch are not alwayes wiſe; and if we take in that ſence alſo, it is a further confirmation of the generall truth in hand, That wiſdome is the gift of God, and therefore thoſe men are not alwayes wiſe, whom we might moſt probably looke upon as ſuch. For as we ſee Great men, who have the advantage of meanes for education in learning, are not alwayes the wiſeſt; ſo the aged, who have that great advantage of time and experience to gather wiſdome are not; Both often come ſhort in abilities of underſtanding and prudence, the former of their inferiors, the latter of their Juniors. This is expreſſe in the latter part of the verſe, and therefore needs not be inferred from this firſt part of it, by way of interpretation; *Great men are not alwayes wiſe*, then followes this disjunctive propoſition;

οὐκ ὁι πολυχρόνιοι σοφοί. Sep.

Neither doe the aged underſtand Judgement; or, *that which is right.*

The word *Miſhpat* is taken two wayes in Scripture; firſt, for the rule of Righteouſneſſe; *Samuel* told the people, the judgement or manner of the Kingdome, (1 *Sam.* 10. 25.) that is, how the kingdome ſhould be ordered and governed, according to judgement and rules of righteouſneſſe. Secondly, Such an actuall Adminiſtration as is according to that rule of righteouſneſſe, is in Scripture called judgement. The aged doe not alwayes underſtand judgement in either notion; they doe not alwayes

underſtand the rule, nor doe they alwayes act according to the rule which they underſtand; they vvho fayle in one, much more in both theſe, doe not underſtand judgement. Sometimes the aged are at a loſſe and know not vvhat to doe, and oftentimes they are ſo entangled with their luſts, that they will not doe vvhat they know. Yet here remember, theſe words are not to be taken as an abſolute negation of vviſdome to the antient, much leſſe as a reproach upon them: For uſually the aged are moſt underſtanding in judgement, and we may more probably and doe more frequently finde Judgement with them, then among thoſe that are young. And therefore when *Elihu* ſaith, *neither doe the aged underſtand Judgement*; his meaning is only this, old age doth not give vviſdome, nor is it the old mans priviledge only, to underſtand judgement.

Hence note.

As honour or greatneſſe of eſtate, ſo age or greatneſſe of yeares, doth not confer wiſdome upon any man.

Time doth neither ſtop nor convey knowledge and underſtanding; old men have not their knowledge by their Antiquitie, and therefore, *as no man is wiſe at all times, ſo no man is made wiſe by time.* In ſtrict ſence, vviſdome is not the *daughter of time*, but the *gift of the eternal.* It is not time but divine favour vvhich makes wiſe. They are ſoone made wiſe and learned, whom God will teach. The teachings of God make young men like the ancients in vviſdome, and without his teaching, the aged are like children in folly. God ſometimes denieth vviſdome to the Ancient, and ſometimes he takes vviſdome from them. And God ſuffers old men to act like children, to goe out of the way, to doe fooliſhly, that he may ſtaine the glory of all fleſh, and that all might both know and have their dependance on him alone. Hence take two or three deductions.

Intelligentia juris non pendet a ſenectute. Piſc:

First, From the Connection of theſe two verſes, we learne that, *The ſpirit of God is not tyed to any age or degree of men*; *The Inſpiration of the Almighty giveth underſtanding*; *Great men are not alwayes wiſe*, &c. The Spirit of God is a free Spirit; and as the Spirit is free becauſe he moves without any deſert in the object; as alſo becauſe he gives liberally, plentifully, and abundantly; ſo the Spirit of God is free as to the choice of objects, he

he gives here and not there, he paſſeth by this man, and takes hold of that, he ſometimes paſſeth by the rich, and takes the poore, (*Eccl.* 9. 15.) *The poore wiſe man ſaved the Citie*; ſometimes he paſſeth by the old, and takes the young; and he doth all this, that we might aſcribe all to himſelfe, not to the age of man, not to any thing in man. God hath promiſed to be with his Church, and with his Miniſters by his Spirit to the end of the world; but the Spirit hath his choice as to particular men, and none have been more deceived then they that thought the Spirit in bonds or tyed to them; *Come* (ſay they, *Jer.* 18. 18.) *let us deviſe devices againſt Jeremiah*; *For the Law ſhall not periſh from the Prieſt, nor Counſell from the wiſe, nor the word from the Prophet*; The Prieſts are of this opinion, and *Jeremiah* is out of the way, he is a falſe Prophet, and therefore certainly we may proceed in our devices againſt him, for we have the opinion of the Prieſts and Prophets with us; Thus they ſpake, as if the Spirit of God had been bound up to that order. We ought to ſeeke wiſdome at the Prieſts mouth, yet they who reſt upon their vviſdome may ſoone be deceived; knowledge may periſh from the Prieſts mouth, and counſel from the ancient. The great Cheate which the Pope hath put upon the world is, *That the Spirit of God is tyed to the pumells of his Chaire, or that there he cannot erre.* But as particular men, ſo whole Counſells of learned and aged men have erred. True vviſdome is not the birth of time, nor the peculiar of a party, but the free gift of the Spirit of God, who is moſt free, both in what he giveth, and to whom he giveth. Therefore

Secondly, *Let us not pin our faith or our Conſciences upon men, how great, or how Ancient ſoever they are*; Let us give reſpect to the Ancient, and the honourable, (not to doe it is not only uncivill but ſinfull) yet let us not give up our Conſciences to them; *For great men are not alwayes wiſe, neither doe the aged underſtand Judgement*; We muſt not reverence any mans perſon to the prejudice of the truth. The opinions of great or ancient men are not to be received, as Oracles, without debate; we have liberty to Conſider of them, and to Compare them with the rule: We muſt prove all things, and hold faſt that only which is good. A heathen gave that direction to thoſe who heare philoſophicall diſcourſes; *You muſt take off all thoſe conſiderations which concerne the perſon ſpeaking, and only mind what is ſpoken:* his An-

Quæ in philoſophia dicuntur ea oportet exiſtimatione ejus

quidicit detracta, ſeorſum per ſe examinari, Etenim canities dicentis, geſtus ſupercilia, &c. faciunt ad percellendum imperitum Auditorem. Plutarct de Auditione.

tiquity, that he is an old man, and his authority, that he is a great man, muſt not ſway you; His outward geſture, tone and gravity, his ſevere or demure lookes, which much affect, almoſt aſtonish unlearned auditors, and make them ready to ſwallow any thing that is uttered, muſt all be layd aſide when the matter delivered and aſſerted, comes to be examin'd and layd in the ballance. Believe what is ſaid becauſe you judge it true, doe not believe it true becauſe ſuch or ſuch a man hath ſaid it; becauſe an old man, or a great man, or a good man hath ſaid it. How ſtrictly then and religiouſly is this to be obſerved in hearing the word of God, and the doctrines of faith? in that caſe be ſure to lay aſide all that concernes the ſpeaker, and weigh what he ſpeakes alone and ſingle in the Ballance of the Sanctuary.

---Tempera quippe virtutem non prima negant, non ultima donant.

Thirdly, Then, *we ought not to deſpiſe what young men ſay, becauſe of their youth.* If old men be not alwayes wiſe, then wiſdome may be with the young; ſometimes an opinion is undervalued, becauſe it is the opinion of a young man; and truths are not received, becauſe he that delivers them hath not ſeene many dayes. As it is a ſin to adore old age, or to give up our faith and Conſcience to it; ſo it is a ſin to ſlight youth, in doing ſo we may ſlight the truth. *Paul* ſaith to *Timothy*, *Let no man deſpiſe thy youth*; Which as it is a Caution to *Timothy* (as hath been ſhewed) to carry himſelfe wiſely and warily, leſt he ſhould occaſion others to ſlight or deſpiſe him; ſo it is a Caution to the people, that they ſhould not deſpiſe him becauſe of his youth; That which is the true glory of *gray hayess*, *doth ſometimes Crowne the youthfull head*, wiſdome (I meane) and ripeneſſe of underſtanding. It was ſaid of a godly woman, *Shee had a youthfull body, but an aged mind.* *Samuel* was young in yeares, but in grace elder then old *Ely*; *Jeremiah* was young, but how wiſe did the Inſpiration of God make him? *Daniel* was young, yet wiſer then all the Magicians and Aſtrologers; *Timothy* and *Titus* were young, yet honourable for prudence and piety; and therefore, ſeeing great men are not alwayes wiſe, neither doe the aged underſtand Judgement, as we ſhould not accept what old men ſay becauſe of their age; ſo let us not ſlight what young men ſay becauſe of their youth.

Corpore Juvencula, animo cana fuit. Ambr: de Agnete. Ser: 90.

When God furniſheth young men with abilities, and calleth them to his worke, even old men muſt be willing, at leaſt not diſ-

diſdaine, to heare them. Chriſt muſt be heard in or by whom ſoever he will ſpeake. God indeed doth uſually ſerve himſelfe by the aged, yet he hath abundantly teſtified that truth is not bound up to old age. Modeſty ſhould bridle young men from being over-forward to ſhew themſelves, but it muſt not ſhut or ſeale up their lips. Old men muſt have the preheminence; *Elihu* ſhewes us that order (*v.7.*) *I* (ſaith he) *ſaid dayes ſhall ſpeake, and multitude of yeares ſhall teach wiſdome:* We muſt firſt attend and give eare to our elders. And when we are to chuſe Officers or Governours, to chuſe ignorant Greene-heads before knowing Gray hayres, were a perverting of all order. Therefore men of yeares having grace and wiſdome proportionable, are to be preferred before the younger. In that caſe it were a ſhame to advance young men, with a neglect of the aged. But when God gives more grace and underſtanding to young men then to ancients, our approbation ſhould follow his preparation, and whom he qualifies beſt, we ſhould ſooneſt chuſe. *The order of Nature is good, yet not alwayes fitteſt to be obſerved.* Right reaſon and the rule of the word of God muſt ſway and caſt our vote, not the age and yeares of men. When *Samuel* was ſent to anoynt a King in the place of *Saul* among the ſons of *Jeſſe*, he looking on *Eliab* ſaid, *Surely the Lords anoynted is before him* (1 Sam: 16. 5.) *but the Lord ſaid unto him* (v. 6.) *Looke not on his countenance, or on the height of his ſtature, becauſe I have refuſed him, for the Lord ſeeth not as man ſeeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.* Now, as we are not to be taken with the beauty and ſtature of men, ſo not with their gray haires and outward gravity. *Old men are not alwayes wiſe*; wiſdome and a heart for God, a good heart, or a heart to doe good, may dwell with a greene Head, even with a greener then ſeven, the eighth or greeneſt of all (ſo was *Davids*) that come or ſtand in a day of Election before us.

JOB,

JOB. Chap. 32. Verſ. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

Therefore I ſaid, Hearken to me: I alſo will ſhew mine opinion.
Behold, I waited for your words: I gave eare to your reaſons, whileſt you ſearched out what to ſay.
Yea, I attended unto you: and behold, there was none of you that convinced Job, or that anſwered his words:
Leſt ye ſhould ſay; We have found out wiſdome: God thruſteth him downe and not man.
Now he hath not directed his words againſt me: neither will I anſwer him with your ſpeeches.

Elihu having aſſerted this negative propoſition in the former verſe, *Great men are not alwayes wiſe, neither doe the aged underſtand Judgement*, makes his inference from it in theſe words.

Verſ. 10. *Therefore I ſayd hearken to me.*

As if he had ſaid; *Though I am none of the great men of the world, though I am none of the aged among the ſons of men, yet hearken unto me; for ſeeing great and aged men are not alwayes wiſe, nor have ingroſſed all wiſdome and underſtanding to themſelves, it is poſſible that ſome beames of wiſdome may ſhine forth even from ſo meane a Junior, even from ſuch a puny as* (I muſt confeſſe) *I am.*

We may alſo make the inference from the 8th verſe; *There is a ſpirit in man, and the inſpiration of the Almighty giveth underſtanding. Therefore I ſaid hearken to me*; As if he had ſaid, *Though I am a young man, and have not had either thoſe naturall or accidentall advantages of the ancient for the gathering of any great ſtocke or treaſures of wiſdome, yet there is an inſpiration of the Almighty which giveth underſtanding. If the Lord will make uſe of me, and inſpire me, if he pleaſe to breath his truths into me, and irradiate my ſoule with divine light, I may be able to doe and ſay ſome thing in this matter.* The inference, you ſee, followes well and without ſtraine from either of thoſe premiſes. *There-*

Therefore I ſaid, hearken to me.

It may be queried, to whom did *Elihu* ſay this? We tranſlate the words indefinitely, not determining them to this or that perſon; But the Original ſeemes to ſpeake perſonally; *Therefore I ſaid, heare thou me.* Which may be underſtood two wayes; Firſt, that *Elihu* directed his ſpeech principally to *Job*, *Heare thou what I ſhall ſay.* Secondly, that *Elihu* ſpake to the whole company there preſent, as if they had been but one man; we may ſpeake in a congregation of hundreds and thouſands, we may ſpeake to many, as if there were but one to heare; as what is ſpoken to a few, may be intended to all. (*Mark* 13. 37.) *What I ſay unto you*, (my Diſciples) *I ſay unto all, watch.* So that which is ſaid to all, is ſurely ſaid to every one in the aſſembly where 'tis ſaid. Though we take *Elihu* here, as ſpeaking directly but to one perſon, yet we muſt take him as deſiring that every perſon preſent ſhould take it as ſpoken to himſelfe; *Hearken to me.*

Hence note firſt.

When any ſpeake reaſon, and hold out truth, they are to be heard.

No man ſhould ſtop his eare with a prejudice to the perſon. He that ſpeaks truth, deſerves to be heard: though (as *Elihu*) he be a young man, or inferior to many in age, yet he is to be heard, though inferior to many in power and experience, yet he is to be heard; (*Eccle.* 4. 13.) *Better is a poore and wiſe child, then an old and foolish King that will not be admoniſhed.* And better is a poore and wiſe child, then an old man that can give no admonition. As that man is in a ſad condition, whether king or ſubject, that will not be admoniſhed, ſo that man, be he never ſo ancient, is not much to be regarded, that is not able to give admonition. But though both diſcreete young men, and diſcreete poore men are to be heard when they ſpeak truth and reaſon, yet that of *Solomon* (*Eccle.* 9. 16.) is too often verified; *The poore mans wiſdome is deſpiſed, and his words are not heard.* Moſt conclude, if a man be poore, his counſell is ſo too, and if he be young, how can he be a counſeller? yet, *heare me* (ſaith *Elihu*)

I also will shew mine opinion, or my knowledge.

דעי *Scientiam meam.* Mont.

I will shew what my understanding is, or what light God hath given me in this case. The words are plaine.

Note from them.

what truth or truths we have received and know, we should communicate and make knowne.

'Tis a duty to shew our opinion when we have a call and an occasion to shew it, as *Elihu* here had. Some have knowledge, who will not shew it; They (which Christ forbids, *Matth.* 5.15.) put their candle under a bushell. God hath lighted a candle, and set it up in some mens spirits, yet they either quite conceale or much obscure it. God hath given them a talent of knowledge, and they like the unprofitable servant, wrap it up in a Napkin. They will not shew their opinion. Not to shew what we have, when called to it, is a deniall that we have it. As good not have a candle, or a talent, as let our candle be hid, or hide our talent. The very Heathen condemned this, while they sayd, *Covered vertue, is buried vertue.* Yea while a man covers his vertues, parts, and abilities, he burieth himselfe alive, or is dead while he lives. As the Scripture saith, they have only a name to be alive, but are dead, who make a shew of more then they have (*Rev.* 3. 2.) so they have a name to be dead, or may be numbred among the dead, who will not shew what indeed they have.

There are two things which hinder men from shewing their opinion; First, idlenesse, they are loath to take the paines to shew it. Secondly, shamefastnesse; There is a commendable modesty, 'tis not good to be over-forward in shewing our opinion; But that modesty is sinfull, which quite hinders us from shewing our opinion. They who keepe in their knowledge and opinion either through idlenesse, or shamefastnesse, doe almost as ill as they who shew their opinion, and declare their knowledge through pride and and high-mindednesse, or meerely to shew themselves, to shew their wit, and to make a noyse of their parts and learning. 'Tis sinfull selfe-pleasing either to know only that we may know, or to publish what we know only to be knowne. With some 'tis nothing that they have knowledge, unlesse others know

know that they have it. An affectation to appeare knowing, is as bad as to be ignorant. *I will shew mine opinion* (said *Elihu*) But why would he shew it? We have reason to judge, it was from the honesty of his heart, not from the height of his Spirit. And when ever we shew our opinion, we ought to shew it out of an honest heart, and for honest ends, such as these.

First, To instruct those who are ignorant.

Secondly, To reduce those who are out of the way.

Thirdly, To feed hungry soules with wholesome doctrine. (*Prov.* 10. 21.) *The lips of the righteous feed many.*

Fourthly, To strengthen the weake.

Fifthly, To confirme the doubtfull.

Sixthly, To comfort the sorrowfull.

Seventhly, To encourage the fearefull.

Eightly, To quicken the sloathfull in the wayes and worke of God.

Lastly, And above all, That God may be glorified by the use of the talent that he hath given. (1 *Pet.* 4. 10.) *As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good Stewards of the manifold grace of God.* Stewards must not set up their owne, but their Masters Intereſt. We should minister by every gift as Stewards of the manifold grace of God.

I will shew mine opinion (saith *Elihu.*)

But what haste? *Elihu* it seemeth foresaw some ready to object; Why doe you a young man take upon you to speake in a cause, wherein so many of your Elders and Betters have not prevailed? why are you so busie? 'Tis much boldnes for you, or such as you to declare your opinion in this controversie, wherein such wise, learned, & godly men have, without successe, ingaged already. To this objection, *Elihu* makes a preventing answer, rendring this account of his undertaking; As if he had said, *I have attentively observed all the passages and traverses of this dispute, I have heard all that Jobs friends have offered, who her for vindication of the justice and righteousnes of God in laying that great affliction upon him, or for the conviction of Job, to make him see his sin, and sit downe humbled. I have heard all this* (saith *Elihu*) *and upon the whole matter I find, Job is yet unanswered, or that there is need of a further answer to stop his mouth, to silence his complaints, and*

humble him under the hand and soveraigne power of God.

This is the scope and summe of these two verses following.

Vers. 11. *Behold, I waited for your words, I gave eare to your reasons, whilest you searched out what to say.*

Vers. 12. *Yea I attended unto you; and behold, there is none of you that convinced Job, or that answered his words.*

You have the generall sence of the text, I shall yet proceed to a more particular explication of it.

Behold, I waited for your words.

יחל *moratus est, præstolatus est, expectavit.*

The word which we translate *to waite*, imports three things in Scripture; First, an act of hope, or to be carried towards any thing desirable, with a wonderfull desire to enjoy it; *Hope causeth the soule to breath after fruition.* Secondly, the word implyeth that griefe or trouble which possesseth the mind upon a long stay or detainment of that good which we desire and hope to attaine. Thirdly, it notes, the soules patient waiting (though grieved and burdened with present delayes) for future enjoyment. In all or any of these sences, *Elihu* might say, *Behold, I waited for your words*, I earnestly desired to heare you speake to satisfaction, and I am grieved that you did not; and I would, if need were, patiently waite still, did I not perceive you had done, and quitted your hands of this worke.

Behold, I waited for your words.

לדבוי כם

Mr *Broughton* renders, *Behold, I waited through your speech*, or, *into your words.* I stood still, but I have not been asleep, I have long expected, you would say what is right, and I have seriously considered what you sayd, *I waited for your words*;

I gave eare to your reasons.

Attendi usq; ad sensa vestra; Iun: *i.e. Accuratissimè & quam penitissime sensa animi vestri exploravi.* Id:

That is, to find what convincing reason was couched in your arguments. The Hebrew is, *I gave eare to your understanding*; That is, I attended to find out your apprehensions, or to gather up your sence in this matter, that I might not mistake your meaning, nor answer at randome. The vulgar translation reads it, *I have heard your wisdome*; That is, what wisdome there was in your

your words. The truth or reason that is in words, is the wisdome of them. So that, when *Elihu* saith, *I gave eare to your reasons*, or, *to your understanding*, it intimates that he tooke the exactest heed he possibly could to find out the utmost tendency and purpose of their discourse. As if he had said; *I have weighed every tittle that ye have spoken, and tryed it by mine eare, to find whether it were solid yea or no.*

Audivi prudentiam vestram. Vulg: *Diligentissimè auscultavi rationes vestras, quas ex & pro intelligentia vestra attulisti, & quas dignas esse putastis et ad rem aptas.* Merc:

There is one clause further to be opened in this verse; *I gave eare to your reasons,*

While you searched out what to say.

This implyeth that *Jobs* friends did ever and anon, take time to consider either each man with himselfe, or that they consulted one with another, what answer to shape and make to *Job.*

Whilest ye searched out.

חקר *Scrutatus, perscrutatus est remota & obstrusa.*

The word which we translate *to search out*, notes the strictest search after that which is hidden, remote and secret. 'Tis applyed (*Deut?* 13. 14.) to that care which Judges ought to take in finding out the truth of an accusation brought against enticers to Idolatry. The strictness of the Originoll is, *While ye searched out words.* As if he had said, *I am perswaded you have strained your selves to the utmost, to find out what to say, you did not speake what came next, but searched for your answers.*

We may learne a good lesson from the practice of *Elihu*; we see he was no idle hearer; yea in him we have the description or character of an active hearer; *I waited for your words, I gave eare to your reasonings, while ye searched out what to say.*

Hence note.

We must diligently heare and give eare, weigh and consider what is spoken, before we give answer.

No man is well prepared to answer, but he that hath been an attentive hearer. And as no man can be a fit answerer in poynts under disputation, so no man can be a fruitfull practiser in poynts of instruction, but he that hath been a diligent hearer. 'Tis our duty, when the word is preacht, to waite, not for a sound of words, not for fine words, or words dressed up with affected eloquence, but for sound savory words, for words that have

 weight

weight and light in them, for words that have ſtrength and authority in them, to prevaile upon the heart, and conquer us to obedience. Theſe are the only words, worth the waiting for; and for theſe we ought to waite.

Secondly, Before *Elihu* comes to give his opinion, he tells *Jobs* friends, that he had diligently heard the matter out, even all their reasonings and ſearchings.

Hence note.

We muſt not make a judgement from any one part of a diſcourſe, we muſt take all together.

We muſt compare the firſt and laſt, the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and ending of what is ſayd; We muſt looke quite through. 'Tis not ingenuous to picke up this or that paſſage, to take a piece here, and a piece there; we can never make a true judgement, till the whole is layd together. As, many exceedingly miſtake about the works of God, ſo about the words of men, becauſe they judge the whole by this or that part: Whereas they ſhould judge of the parts by the whole. As therefore we ought not to make concluſions about the providentiall works of God, till the laſt Act, or till all is concluded; ſo we muſt not judge the diſcourſes of men, till the laſt word, or till they have concluded their diſcourſe. Heare a man out, and then anſwer him.

Ab æquo attentionem ſibi conciliat. Merc:

Thirdly, *Elihu* ſeemes to chalenge it as his due to be heard ſpeake, after he had fully heard them ſpeaking.

Hence note,

They who have had the patience to heare others, ought to have the priviledge of being heard themſelves.

Heare me, ſaith *Elihu*; Why ſo? *I have heard you.* It is but equall and rationall, that he ſhould have liberty of ſpeaking, who hath ſhewed an attentive perſeverance in hearing.

From the laſt branch of the verſe, *while ye ſearched out what to ſay.*

Obſerve.

We ought to ponder and try what we ſpeake, before we ſpeake it.

The worke of the tongue muſt follow that of the underſtanding.

דברי חפצ

ing. (*Eccl:* 12. 10.) *The Preacher ſought to find out acceptable words, or words of delight, words of pleaſure.* The preacher ſought; But how did he ſeeke? He ſought diligently and earneſtly. The preacher ſought, but in what way did he ſeeke? ſurely he ſought by diligent ſtudy and earneſt prayer, *to find out acceptable words.* What words were thoſe? not *men-pleaſing words*, not ſoft words, which might paſſe with all ſorts, or humour all phanſies, not ſuch words as would ſerve for pillows under bad mens elbows. The acceptable words which the Preacher ſought, were words of truth and ſobriety, words of power and Authority; in no other ſence may we ſeeke out acceptable words, or words of delight; nor is there any true delight, but in words of truth. Thus every faithfull Preacher ſhould ſeeke to find out acceptable words; every holy and wholſome doctrine is made up of ſuch words. Only thoſe doctrines and exhortations which are formed and compoſed of ſuch words, are (as the Apoſtle ſaith of the great doctrine of Jeſus Chriſt, manifeſted in the fleſh to ſave ſinners) *faithfull ſayings, and worthy of acceptation* (1 Tim: 1. 15.) *Elihu* tooke notice of this in *Jobs* friends, they did not ſpeak hand over head, but ſearched what they might ſay moſt to the purpoſe (as they judged) of the cauſe in hand, and to the profit of their hearers.

Elihu thought he had not yet ſpoken enough in way of apologie for himſelfe. And therefore the penman of this diſpute repreſents him ſpeaking further, yet much to the ſame ſence.

Verſ. 12. *Yea, I attended unto you, and behold, there was none of you that convinced Job, or that anſwered his words.*

I attended unto you; That is, *I did not only deſire to receive full ſatisfaction from you, but I attended, hoping at laſt to find it.* I ſtayed, I did not make haſte, nor did I haſten you. Some expound the word with a great ſignificancy, I did as throughly conſider and attend what was ſayd, as if I had looked into you. Thus (ſaith *Elihu*) *I attended unto you.*

Uſq; ad intima veſtra conſiderabam vos. Druſ:

But what did he find? He found two faults in their words after he had attended unto them throughly. Firſt, he found them faulty, becauſe *none of them had convinced Job.* Their proofes did not make good their accuſations. The ſecond fault which *Elihu* found,

found, was, They had not refuted *Jobs* assertion. As if he had said, *Ye have spoken much, but upon the matter have done little. I waited, & I attended, expecting great things from you, but I have bin deceived in my expectation. For having taken out the strength and substance, the spirits and quintessence of your speech, I find nothing coming up, either to a conviction of Job, as faulty in matter of fact, nor to an answer of him, as defective in matter of argument. So that when I have layd all that ye have spoken in the ballance, it weighes too light, Job is your match, yea, he hath over-matcht you.*

Behold, there is none of you that convinceth Job.

The Hebrew word which we here translate *to convince*, answers the Greeke in the New Testament, which is also translated, *To reprove or convince.* And both the Hebrew and the Greek, carry a threefold signification.

ἐλεγχειν.

First, to prove, or to make good what is affirmed, either first by reason and argument, or, secondly, by testimony and authority. When such proofes and reasons, such testimonies and authorities are brought in, as a man can make no exceptions against, or cannot evade nor reply to, then he is convinced. The Apostle giving a description of faith (*Heb:* 11. 1.) saith, *It is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence* (or conviction) *of things not seene.* The Spirit of God makes conviction before faith acts. He brings such proofes, such cleare evidences, that though the thing be not seene, yet the soule sits downe convinced, that it is so, as fully as if we had seene it. The greatest conviction we have to believe, is from authority and testimony; yea, that's properly and only faith, when we consent to a thing upon the testimony and authority of another.

ἔλεγχος.

Secondly, The word signifies to reprove, or rebuke with words. (*Math:* 18. 15.) *Moreover, if thy brother shall trespasse against thee, goe and tell him of his fault.* To reprove a man, is First to tell him of his fault, and then to blame him for it. Every mans fault must be clearely proved, before he can be justly reproved. Thus the Baptist reproved *Herod* (Luke 3. 19.) And because Light proves, therefore it also reproves (*John* 3. 20.) *Every one that doth evill, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.* The same word is used (*Eph:* 5. 11.) *Have no fellowship with the unfruitfull works of dark-*

darkness, but rather reprove them. And againe (1 *Tim:* 5. 20.) *Them that sin* (that is, either openly, before all, or whose sin hath been proved before all) *rebuke before all*; and, as the same Apostle directs (*Tit:* 2. 25.) *Rebuke them sharply.*

Thirdly, The word signifieth, as to prove and reprove, so to chasten and correct, to rebuke by the hand as well as by the tongue (*Heb:* 12. 5.) *Ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children; my son, despise not thou the chastning of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him.* When thou art rebuked of him by blowes, or receivest sencible convictions. (*Rev:* 3. 19.) *Whom I love I rebuke and chasten.* Here in the Text we must understand the word in the first sence. *There is none of you that hath convinced Job*; That is, ye have not proved what ye have sayd; Ye have called him an hypocrite, and told him that he hath oppressed the poore, and detained the right of the fatherless; But ye have proved none of these evills against him. Ye have not proved the matter of fact, that he might sit downe penitentially confessing himselfe such an offender, as ye have accused him to be.

ὑπ' αὐτ ἐλεγχόμενος, Cum ab eo arguerit.

Hence note.

We can never convince another by what we say, untill we prove what we say.

If we reprove any man for an errour in his judgement, and doe not prove it to be an errour; or if we reprove a man for sin in practice, and doe not prove his practice sinfull, or that he hath practised that sin, no conviction follows. What is sayd and not proved comes to the eare only, not to the conscience. Therefore saith Christ (*John* 8. 46.) *Which of you convinceth me of sin.* Find a spot in my life if you can. I know you are ready to slander me with, but you cannot convince me of evill. It is sayd of *Apollos* (Acts 18. 28.) *He mightily convinced the Jewes.* How did he convince them? not by reproving them only, for not receiving the Messias; he did not barely tell them, ye are a company of unbelievers: but he reproved them by proving the necessity of their receiving Christ the Messias, and the evill of rejecting him, *shewing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.* Here was proofe, and so conviction followed. He convinced them by authority, by the testimony of the word, comparing Scripture with

with Scripture, the prophesie, with the history of Christ. The Apostle would have the Ministers of the Gospel mighty at this worke (*Tit.* 1. 8.) They must *hold fast the faithfull word, that they may be able by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gain-sayers.* Not only must they be able to rebuke gain-sayers, this will not doe it; they must also convince them, or *stop their mouths.* (James 2. 9.) *If any of you have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the Law as transgressors.* How doth the Law convince? Not only by reproving, but by proving, It shews us a rule, and saith, there you have departed from it; here is the line, and there ye have transgressed, or gone over it. Thus ye are convinced, that ye are transgressors. He is both wise and faithfull, he doth his worke like a workman that needeth not be ashamed, who not only gives reproofe but proofe, either of error in judgement, or of evill in practise. For the close of this poynt, I may shew you three great convincers.

First, The holy Spirit of God; This office of the Spirit Christ sets forth (*John* 16. 7.) *I will send the Comforter, and when he is come* (what shall he doe?) *He will convince the world of sin, and of righteousnes, and of Judgement*; That is, he will bring proofe home to the conscience, to shew sinners their evill state and evill lives; He will also bring home to their spirits the allsufficiency of the righteousnes of Jesus Christ, and so overcome their unbeliefe, that they shall not be able to refuse the offers of grace. He will likewise shew them such reasons why they ought to be holy, and walke in the wayes of righteousnes, that they shall neither have power nor will to gain-say.

The second great convincer, is Conscience. They who were so forward to accuse the woman taken in adultery (*John* 8. 9.) were at last *convicted by their owne Conscience, and went out one by one*; Their conscience told them they were guilty, if not for that sin, yet of other sins as bad as that. They were so far before from judging themselves for, that they tooke no notice of their owne faults; they were severe against the woman, but they flattered themselves, till Christ made their owne consciences, their convincers. And surely conscience will one time or other convince to purpose, They who have refused or outstood conviction by the word, yea and put by the motions of the Spirit, shall at last find conscience convincing and speaking home to them.

The

The third great Convincer, is Jesus Christ in person; Of him in the performance of this office, the Apostle speakes clearely (*Jude* v. 15.) *Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his Saints* (And what comes he to doe?) *To execute judgement upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.* Christ will make the greatest of ungodly ones in that great day to acknowledge, that all their hard speeches which they have spoken against the Saints, or godly men, were spoken against him. When prophane men are among their wicked companions, they can jeare at the godly professors of the name of Christ, even while they pretend to honour Christ; But Christ will make them see, that they scorned him, while they scorned the least of those that feared him, and believed on his name. The great day will be a day not only of executing Judgement, but of conviction, every mouth shall be stopped, and all the world of wicked men shall become guilty in their owne sight before God. These are the three great Convincers. The holy Spirit of God, the Conscience of every man, and Jesus Christ in the judgement of the great day.

And let those who now undertake that great worke of conviction, often remember (which was a little before mentioned and set downe) the method to be used and observed in it; First, prove the matter, and then reprove the man. None were ever wrought to any good, by bare reproofe, much lesse by force. Men are not to be driven into the faith by fire and sword, by terrors and imprisonments; conviction must doe it; and that will doe it to purpose. This is the first thing which *Elihu* blamed and burdened *Jobs* friends with; They reproved him, but did not bring sufficient convincing proofe against him. *There was none of you that convinced Job.*

Secondly, He lays this to their charge, that *They had not answered his words.* As ye have not proved your owne allegations, so ye have not refuted nor infirmed his reasons.

But how could *Elihu* say, They had not answered his words, when to every word he spake we find their severall answers? *Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said*; *Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said*; The like is said of *Zophar the Naamathite.* They had been answering all the while, yet saith *Elihu*,

Behold, there was none of you that anſwered his words. I ſhall reſolve this doubt, by giving this note; which was alſo given upon the 3d verſe, where ſee more.

Unleſſe we anſwer home to the matter, and (as we ſay) hit the naile on the head, we have given no anſwer. We have not anſwered, unleſſe we give a ſatisfactory anſwer. When the Reſpondent in Schooles acquits himſelfe well, The Moderator brings him off honorably, ſaying, *Thy Anſwers ſuffice. Jobs* friends had been anſwering long, and they made many long anſwers, but *Elihu*, the Moderator was forced to tell them, ye have not anſwered ſufficiently.

Laſtly, *Elihu* having heard all their anſwers, and finding that they did not reach a proofe againſt *Job*, nor anſwer his reaſonings and replyes, he ſpeaks himſelfe.

Hence note.

When we have weighed all duely, and find that others have not done the deed, we muſt not diſſemble our judgements, nor flatter them in their faulty anſwers.

Elihu would not doe ſo, and the reaſon why he would not, is layd downe in the next words.

Verſ. 13. *Leſt ye ſhould ſay, we have found out wiſdome; God thruſteth him downe not man.*

In the former verſe *Elihu* ſhewed his owne diſappoyntment, while he waited upon others; *I attended unto you* (ſaith he to *Jobs* three friends) *and behold, there was none of you that convinced Job, or that anſwered his words*; Then followes, *Leſt ye ſhould ſay, we have found out wiſdome*, &c. In which words *Elihu* proceeds with his Preface, that he might the more fairely fall into diſcourſe with *Job*; for having told *Jobs* friends that he had waited in vaine, for ſatisfaction from their anſwers or replyes, they having not convinced him, either by ſolid reaſon, or by Authentick Authority and teſtimony, that he was ſo bad as they judged him to be; He adds, this I affirme.

Leſt ye ſhould ſay, we have found out wiſdome.

That is, leſt ye ſhould ſay it boaſtingly, and *cry victory* againſt this

his afflicted man. The word is often uſed in Scripture to ſignifie *ſaying* with boaſting, or ſpeaking in pride of ſpirit. The Baptiſt (*Matth. 3. 9.*) tells the Phariſees, *Thinke not to ſay within your ſelves, we have Abraham to our father*; his meaning is, doe not ſpeake of your pedegree boaſtingly nor proudly: that ye are *Abrahams* children will doe you no good, unleſſe ye are good, like your father *Abraham*, and doe as he did. So here, *Leſt ye ſhould* (proudly) *ſay, we have found out wiſdome*; we have found the myſtery of the whole matter, we have found out the key, which unlocks this ſecret, or as Mr *Calvins* tranſlater wittily as well as truly expreſſeth, *We have found out the beane in the Cake*, we ſay, *Leſt ye ſhould ſay, we have found out wiſdome*; That is, that which will ſurely prove us wiſe men, and gaine us the reputation of wiſdome among all wiſe and knowing men. What their ſpeciall reſolve was, which they counted widome, followes in the cloſe of the verſe according to our reading, *God thruſteth him downe not man.* But before I deale with that concluſion, I ſhall briefly note two things from thoſe words, *Leſt ye ſhould ſay, we have found out wiſdome.*

Rem acu tetigit & ipſum cardinum in quo tota controverſia vertitur de Jobo. Druſ.

First, *Man is very apt to ſpeake boaſtingly, to have high thoughts, and then to utter great words of himſelfe.* Man is a proud piece of fleſh, and a ſmall matter will make him ſhew his pride, and ſpread his plumes (like that naturally-painted bird) if not explicitely in words, yet his ſpirit will ſwell, and be puft up with towring conceits of himſelfe. The Prophet *Habakkuk* deſcribes this temper (*Chap. 2. 4.*) *He that is lifted up, his ſpirit is not upright in him*; *A proud ſpirit is alwayes a falſe ſpirit. They who thinke highly of themſelves, thinke themſelves higher then they are.* And 'tis a great argument that man is naturally very proud, becauſe God hath given ſo many ſtops and checks to his pride, or hath made ſo many proviſions againſt it. The very contrivance of the work of Redemption in that way by the hand of Jeſus Chriſt, had this great deſigne in it; For as the chiefe deſigne in reference to man was his ſalvation (that was the ultimate end as to man) ſo there was another deſigne in it, why God would ſave man that way, which the Apoſtle layeth downe (*1 Cor. 1. 29.*) *That no fleſh ſhould glory in his ſight*; While God intended to give man glory, he took a courſe to cut off all glorying from man. God would not ſet up man againe to worke his owne ſalvation,

leſt he ſhould be proud of his workes. Though we are now called *to work out our owne ſalvation* (Phil. 2. 12.) yet it is wholly wrought by another ; and we are there commanded to work out our owne ſalvation *with feare* and trembling, not with preſumption and boaſting.

Againe, How apt is man to boaſt of any good he doth ? ſeeing he is not aſhamed to boaſt ſometimes when he doth evill, and of that which is evill, even of the luſts and luſtings of his evill heart. (*Pſal.* 10. 3.) *The wicked boaſteth of his hearts deſire.* And what good is there in the deſire of a wicked mans heart ? He (as ſuch) can deſire nothing, but what is worſe then nothing, ſin or vanity, and yet he boaſts of it.

Yea, man is ready to boaſt, not only of evill done, but of his ability to doe evill ; They in the Prophet boaſted that they *were mighty to drinke wine, and men of ſtrength to mingle ſtrong drinke,* (*Iſa.* 5. 22.) How doe ſome pleaſe themſelves that they are in power, only, becauſe that gives them an advantage to oppreſſe whom they pleaſe, or all thoſe with whom they are diſpleaſed. *David* ſaw that ſpirit ruling and raging in ſpitefull *Doeg*, whom he therefore checks, (*Pſal.* 52. 1.) *Why boaſteſt thou thy ſelfe in miſchiefe, O mighty man ?* The Apoſtle found thoſe (*Phil.* 3. 19.) who *gloried in their ſhame* ; That is, in ſinfull practices (even making their belly their God) whereof they ought to be aſhamed. The Prophet ſpake of their like long before, (*Iſa.* 3. 9.) *They declare their ſin as Sodome, they hide it not* ; As if it had been their ornament and their honour, their beauty and bravery to be wicked.

But eſpecially if bad men doe that which is good, they boaſt of it. A carnal man may for the matter doe good ; yea, he may have a zeale for God. *Jehu* ſaid, *Come ſee my zeale for the Lord,* (2 *Kings* 10. 16.) But *Jehu* deſired more to have his zeale for the Lord ſeene, then to be zealous for the Lord. And ſo his was indeed zeale for himſelfe, not for the Lord. The Phariſees did many good things, but they could not forbeare boaſting in the good they did ; They doe all (ſaith Chriſt, who knew not only what they did, but with what heart) to be ſeene of men, or to have prayſe with men. Yea, not only are evill men ready to boaſt of the good they doe, but the temptation lies hard alſo upon godly men to doe ſo, their hearts are often unduely tranſported, as

as with the thoughts of their gifts, parts, and graces, ſo with what they doe through the gift of grace. Our very graces, much more our outward priviledges, may be an occaſion of boaſting. Pride and boaſting are weeds which grow up from the beſt and richeſt ſoyle. 'Tis rare to ſee any man rich in gifts and graces, and poore in ſpirit ; poverty of ſpirit is the pureſt and trueſt riches of grace.

Secondly, As to the particular here ſpoken of, *Leſt ye ſhould ſay, we have found out wiſdome.*

Note.

Man is very prone to make boaſt of or glory in that which he calleth wiſdome.

When he hath found out (though but ſuppoſed) wiſdome, he cannot containe, he muſt cry it up. It is ſaid of the old *Mathematician*, when (after long ſtudy and beating his braines) he had found out a Concluſion in Geometry, he ran about the Citie (as if tranſported) or raviſhed with this loud out-cry, *I have found it, I have found it* ; and thus *Jobs* friends were ready to cry out, *they had found, they had found out wiſdome.* There is indeed a very great temptation in the finding out or attaining of wiſdome, to puff man up, and ſo make him vaine-glorious. We have great cauſe to be humbled, that we have ſo little wiſdome ; and they that have any ſtore (as they thinke) more then their neighbours, are in great danger of being proud of it. *Knowledge puffeth up,* (1 *Cor.* 8. 1.) When the head is full, the heart grows high. Yet this is to be underſtood of literall knowledge, not of ſpirituall, or of knowledge when and where it is alone without grace, not of gracious knowledge. The more a gracious man knowes, the more humble he is, becauſe his knowledge ſhewes him his own vileneſs and emptineſs ; but the more a carnall man knowes, the more proud he is, becauſe (while ſuch) whatſoever or how much ſoever he knoweth, he knoweth not himſelfe, nor doth he know any thing as *he ought to know it*, as the Apoſtle ſpeakes there at the ſecond verſe. And as meere naturall men, ſo they who are but ſmatterers, or beginners in the wayes of godlineſs, are alſo very ready to be tranſported with an opinion of their parts and knowledge. And therefore, the ſame Apoſtle gives it in charge to *Timothy* (1 Tim. 3. 6.) that he who is called and received into *Archimedes.*

unto Office in the Church, should not be a *novice*; he means it not so much of one that is young in yeares, as of one that is young in the faith, a new plant in the Church, or one newly converted. And he gives this as a reason, *Lest being puft up* (with pride he meanes) by being in such a function, or by having such reputation for wisdome and knowledge, as is requisite to a Gospel Minister, *he* (which is a sad fall, if not a down-fall into utter ruine) *fall into the condemnation of the devill.* Not that the devill will condemne him for his pride, no, the more proud men are, the more the devill approves of them; nor is it the devills office to condemne, it is his office to execute; he is the executioner, not the Judge; and what ever he condemneth any man for, he will not condemne him for pride, no nor for any sin. So that when the Apostle saith, *Lest he fall into the condemnation of the devill*, it is as if he had said, *Lest he be condemned for the same sin that the devill was condemned for, which was pride:* And it was pride (for he is the right father of the *Gnosticks*) arising out of a high opinion, or conceit of his owne wisdome, and knowledge. *Zophar* sayd (*Job* 11. 12.) *Vaine man would be wise.* But is it an argument of a mans vanity that he would be wise? it is a mans duty to be wise, that's a good desire; why then doth he say, *Vaine man would be wise?* The meaning is, Vaine man would be in account for wisdome, he would be reckoned among wise men, or he desires more to be thought wise, then to be wise. *A vaine man, indeed, cannot desire any good, but in reference to some evill that cleaves to it*; and upon that account he may desire to be wise. The first sin came into the world by an attempt to get wisdome, or by a proud thought in the hopes of attaining farther wisdome. The wisdome which our first parents sought for, was not wisdome to know God, for that is the most excellent wisdom, *It is eternall life to know God*; So then it was not wisdome to know God, but it was wisdome to be *knowing as God* which they affected, they would be high and lifted up above the rate of a creature in knowledge, and that was their ruine. And I shall shew (in two things) why there is such a temptation in wisdome, or the reason why when we have found out that which hath a shew of wisdome in it, we are so forward to applaud our selves, & boast in it.

First, 'Tis so, because wisdome is no common Commodity, as I may say; wisdome is but in few hands, if you consider the multi-

multitude of men in the world. Now that which few have, all who have it are ready to be proud of. No man is proud of that which is every mans; no man is proud that he is a man, or proud that he hath reason, because that is common to all men; but all men are not wise, all men are not learned, all men have not an improved wisdome, reason, and understanding; that hath a peculiarity in it, and therefore of that many are proud.

Secondly, Wisdome is not only rare, but very usefull, and (which reacheth this poynt more fully) very ornamentall; and how apt are we to be proud of our ornaments? A man is not proud of his ordinary Clothes, nor a woman of her every-day dresse, but when a man or woman have their ornaments and Jewells on, their Gay-cloathing and rich apparel on, then they are apt to be proud and lifted up, so it is in this case; Wisdome is like Gay-cloathing, it is a Jewell, an ornament, and therefore man is under a temptation when he hath any thing of wisdome, especially any eminency of wisdome about him, to be lifted up and despise others: yea, to arrogate great things to himselfe, and to presume that he can doe no small matters with his braine, or the engine of his understanding. It is a great attainment *to be full of knowledge, and full of humility, high in parts, and lowly in spirit; Lest ye should say, we have found out wisdome.*

God thrusteth him downe not man; or as others read, *God hath cast him downe not man.*

The Omnipotent doth Tosse him not man, saith Mr. *Broughton*. The word signifies to *toss a man* (as it were) *in a blanket*, That is, to toss him as we please farre enough from his pleasure, or to toss him in open view. As if they had sayd, see how the omnipotent tosseth this man; *The Omnipotent tosseth him not man.* There are two references of these words given by Expositers.

First, Some expound them as the words of *Elihu*. Secondly, Others as the words of *Jobs* three friends.

First, *Lest ye should say, we have found out wisdome. I* (saith *Elihu*) say, *God shall thrust him downe not man.* That's the principle by which I will deale with *Job*, and so thrust him downe from that opinion which he hath of himselfe, and humble him, (that's the sence of the words (*thrust him downe*) according to this interpretation) God shall doe it and not man. Some of the learned

Non est hoc opus illius hominis ut Iobum depellat a sua sententia, sed divina plane virtute opus est. Cum tamen deus humano ministerio utatur gratioje ad perficiendas res hujusmodi absit ut mihi arrogarem, quod deus sermone meo effecturus est. Iun:

learned insist much upon this interpretation; wherein *Elihu* is supposed making a great discovery of his humility, as not daring to undertake *Job* himselfe, but going about it in the strength and power of God; As if he had said, *'t is a worke above or too hard for man to put Job off from that opinion wherein he is setled. To doe this is a worke worthy of God, nor can it be done by any power, but that which is properly divine. And seeing God is graciously pleased to use the ministery of man for the bringing about such workes of Grace; farre be it from me that I should arrogate and assume that to my selfe which God is pleased to work by my word.* We may parallel this speech of *Elihu* with two other places of Scripture, which will give light to it. First, (*Gen.* 42. 16.) *And Joseph answered Pharoah, saying, It is not in me, but God shall give Pharoah an answer of peace.* When *Pharoah* propounded to him his Dreames of the seven leane kine, and of the seven thin ears of Corne, *Joseph* professed it was not in him to expound them, but only in God; and that God would doe it if he was confident; *God shall give to Pharoah an answer of peace.* I owne no wisdome in or of my selfe, enabling me to resolve this question, or to open this secret; *If ever I doe it, 't is God who doth it, not I*; unlesse he reveale the secret unto me, I cannot reveale it unto thee. Thus also spake *Daniel*, (Dan. 2 27.) When all the wise men of *Babylon* were foyld, and gravell'd at the Kings proposall, *The secret which the King hath demanded, cannot the wise men, the Astrologers, the Magicians, and the South-sayers shew unto the King.* They cannot doe it; it is not put by way of interrogation, cannot they doe it? but *they cannot*, by way of negative assertion; how then can it be done? or who can doe it? He answers, *But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh knowne to the King Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter dayes.* As if he had said, *As thy Magicians cannot, so I will not undertake to reveale the secret, but God both can and will,* He will surely doe it, yea, he is now doing it; the text speakes as of a present act, *He maketh knowne to the King*, &c. Thus (according to the exposition before us) *Elihu* saith here, *Lest ye should say, we have found out wisdome*; I tell you plainly, I will not undertake him, and I am much assured ye cannot, therefore *Let God thrust him downe*, let God deale with him, and conquer him, not I, not you, *not man*, not any man. If God will use me as a poore instrument to doe it,

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I am ready, but the whole efficacy and power must be from himselfe. This carrieth a profitable and a holy sence; every good man ascribes the effect of all that he speaks in perswading others for good to the power of God. God must convert the sinner, not man, not the preacher; God must humble the proud, not man, God must cast him downe from his high thoughts, or cast downe the high thoughts that are in him, not man; God must soften and breake the hard heart, not man; in a word, 'tis God who both thrusteth man downe by a gracious work of repentance and selfe-abhorrence, and rayseth him up by a powerfull worke of faith and holy confidence in Jesus Christ: when man hath done his best, he can doe nothing effectually, only God can. Whatsoever good man doth, God doth it in him and by him. Hence those creature-abasing and Christ-exalting questions (*1 Cor.* 3. 5.) *Who is Paul? and who is Apollo? but Ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man. Paul* puts a slight upon himselfe, and a slight upon all instruments, that the whole power might be of God, as he concludes (*v.* 7.) *So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the encrease.* God only thrusts man downe from his vaine and carnal state, God only lifts him up unto a blessed and a heavenly state. This, you see, is an improveable interpretation, as the words are supposed spoken by *Elihu*.

But, I rather referre them to *Jobs* friends, being collected or gathered up by *Elihu*, as the issue of their whole discourse with *Job*. *God thrusteth him downe, and not man.* This is it, that you meane (saith *Elihu*) this is the top of your wisdome, the flower and Creame, the summe and substance of all your arguments. All that ye have sayd is reducible to this one position, *God thrusteth him downe, not man*, and therefore he is a wicked man; This is the wisdome which ye glory to have found.

Now though we take the words as the summe of what *Jobs* friends had spoken, collected and drawne together by *Elihu*, yet there is some variety in opening the sence of them; I will but touch a little at what is offered by severall Interpreters, and stay upon that which I conceive most proper to the place.

First, Some conceive that in these words an account is given why *Jobs* friends gave over speaking, or why they stood silent, either resolving to speake no more, or presuming they had spo-

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Elihu de amicorum Jobi silentio conquerenti, sic respondent. Fecimus de industria, non oporte hominem exagitare Jobum: satis est quod a deo exagitetur. Vatabl:

ken all; As if they had said, *We have found out and concluded among our selves, that 'tis most adviseable for us, or our wisest way to say no more*; you possibly thinke we can say no more, but we doe industriously forbear to say any more; why should we trouble him any further; God troubleth and vexeth him enough. *God thrusteth him downe*, therefore let not man; And therefore we thinke it our wisdome (having sayd this) to forbeare and give him over, for we will not adde affliction any longer to the afflicted. So that as the Apostle speaks concerning the repenting Corinthian (1 *Epist. Cor.* 2. 6, 7.) *Sufficient to such a man is this punishment which was inflicted of many, so that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow*; so *Jobs* friends (according to this Exposition) are brought in speaking the same sence; *Sufficient to him is that punishment which hath been inflicted on him by one, even by God, so that contrariwise we ought rather to comfort him, lest he should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.*

Cum deus propellat eum nihil ultra necesse est ut ab homine impugnetur; ut afflicto insuper addatur afflictio; quia satis est quod deus eum ob sua peccata persequatur. Rab: Levi.

Secondly, Others give their meaning thus rigidly; *We think it our wisdome to say no more, but to remit or give him up to God, as a man that is obstinate and will not be convinced. Elihu* told them a little before that none had convinced *Job*; and here they are represented, saying, we indeed have left him to God, as unconvincible by us, and therefore, *God must thrust him downe, not man*; there is a truth in this. Some men are so obstinate in their wayes, though evill, and stiffe in their opinions, though grossest errors, that there is no more dealing with them, such as these are past mans skill to recall or reclaime, they must be left to God. As in extreame dangerous cases of travel in child-birth, the good women sigh and give over, saying, *This is not womans worke, we must leave her to the man*; So in dealing with some men, after long labour and no successe, we must even say, This is not mans worke, he must be left to God, who alone can thrust him downe, man cannot.

Ista animi obfirmatio omne amplius loquendi desiderium adimit cum eo homine, quem nemo homo poterit, sed deus solus de ista animi pertinacia depellere. Iun:

Thirdly, That which is, I conceive, chiefly intended, take thus; I (saith *Elihu*) have undertaken after long waiting and expectance to shew mine opinion, *Lest ye should say, we have found out wisdome*; That is, an argument so strongly concluding *Job* a wicked man, that no wise man can object against it. But what was that irrefragable argument, by which *Jobs* friends hoped to conclude him, and stop his mouth for ever? Surely that which followeth in this

Cum Job affligatur & inusitato modo affligatur, idq; adeo

this verse, *God thrusteth him downe, not man*; That *Jobs* friends layd the maine ground-worke of their hard opinion concerning him in the dealings of God with him, is evident by what hath been shewed from many passages quite through the Booke; All which may be resolved into the sence, now given, of this one; *God thrusteth him downe, not man*, and therefore he is a wicked man.

justo, qui nec fallere nec falli potest in suo judicio, consequitur planè Jobum esse improbū. Aquin: Drus: Merc:

Hence observe.

First, *The afflictions and thrustings downe of some men are eminently from the hand of God.*

Every affliction is from God, but some are more from God. As God is more visibly seene in the lifting up of some men, so in the casting downe of others. Every man that is lifted up, is lifted up by the hand of God; 'Tis the most High, who one way or other, setteth any man on high; but in setting up some men on high, his workings are so high, that every man may see them and say, The finger of God is there, the hand of God hath done it. 'Tis thus also in thrusting men downe; every affliction, every thrusting downe, is from God, there is a hand of God in it; for as *Eliphaz* spake (*Chap.* 5. 6.) *Affliction comes not forth of the dust, nor doth trouble spring out of the ground*: Whence then are troubles? Surely they drop downe from heaven; they are from the earth as to the contracting of them, but from heaven as to the contriving of them. Yet there are some troubles which fall from heaven more apparently then others doe; That is, there is more of God, more of the hand of God in such a dispensation, then there is in others, though there be a hand of God in every one: therefore say *Jobs* friends, *God thrusts him downe, and not man*; this mans afflictions are mighty stroakes from heaven. For though God hath raised up and used instruments against him, yet himselfe hath appeared most against him.

Secondly, Observe.

Those afflictions wherein God doth eminently appeare against a man, seeme to beare the greatest witnesse against him of his sinfulnesse or wickednesse.

That was the scope of *Jobs* friends, This is, say they, an undeniable argument, that the man is wicked, because there is such an eminent hand of God upon him. This was the foundation upon which

which they built all their severall censures of him, yea, their hardest sentences against him. And there is a faire probability in this way of arguing upon foure Considerations.

First, It may be urged, thus; God is just, (men indeed are often unjust and unrighteous in the evill which they bring upon others; but God is just) and therefore he would not lay his hand upon any man in this manner, unlesse he were a wicked man. Surely his iniquity hath found him out, whom the hand of God hath thus found out.

Secondly, God is mercifull, he is gracious, (*Lament.* 3. 33.) *He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the Children of men.* Now, if God hath declared himselfe so unwilling to grieve the Children of men, surely, when we see him so willingly grieve a man, as he hath grieved this or that man, may we not say, he is a wicked man? Judgement is called Gods *strange worke*; but in judging some he acteth as if judgement were his *proper worke*, as if he were in his Element when he is laying heavie strokes on their backs; therefore may we not conclude such among the wicked?

Thirdly, *God is wise*; he cannot be deceived concerning any man; therefore there is some great reason why he afflicts, and what reason can more probably be given of a great affliction, then some great sin? As God is so true that he will not deceive any man, so he is so wise that he cannot be deceived in any man. He cannot misse his mark, nor fall upon a wrong subject in his dispensations; therefore we have faire warrant to say, that a man against whom God appeares so much, appeares very foule to him, what ever faire appearances he may have among men.

Fourthly, Take this Consideration also, when men afflict their brethren, they often do it either out of resolved malice, or in heat of revenge; but God cannot do it with such a spirit, nor from such principles; *The highest acts of revenge in God, are but the awards of Justice.* Againe, Men will afflict others out of envie, or to ease themselves; as the Apostle speaks of parents chastning their children (*Heb.* 12. 9, 10.) *We have had fathers of our flesh, which have corrected us, and we gave them reverence, shall we not much more be in subjection to the father of spirits and live? For they verily for a few dayes chastned us after their owne pleasure*, or (as that text may more clearely be rendred out of the original Greek) *as it seemed good to them, or as they thought good*; As if he had said,

κατὰ τὸ δοκοῦν αὐτοῖς. *pro ut ipsis videbatur.* Bez.

said, They will doe it upon their naturall prerogative, or the right of paternity, without giving any account; Yea, a father will afflict and chasten his child sometimes (in another sence) for *his pleasure*; That is, to vent his passion, and ease himselfe: but God never chastneth us in passion, nor ever purely upon prerogative, but with a respect also to our spirituall (which is the best) profit, and for our good. Now among the good things which God aymeth at in afflicting any man, this is not the least, the purging out of his evills. And therefore when we cannot ascribe the chastisement of man to man, but to God alone, 'tis a witnes against him, at least, it draws a suspition upon him of some great sinfulnes lodged in him, or sinfull wayes walked in by him.

Thirdly, Observe.

It is no Concluding argument against any man that he is wicked, because God afflicts him immediately; or, *how much soever the hand of God appeares in an affliction, 'tis no concluding argument against the afflicted.*

'Tis one principall scope intended by *Elihu* in this discourse, to shew that there were other causes & reasons of Gods afflicting *Job*, or any man else besides him. And that we should not make Conclusions, that the greatest sufferers, are the greatest sinners. For first, though indeed God threatneth to punish the wicked, who wilfully transgresse his Law, yet he afflicts many, without respect to wickednesse. Secondly, though God threatens the wicked only or chiefely at least, yet he reserves a liberty to try the innocent; yea, as *Job* saith in the 9th Chapter, *He laughs at the triall of the innocent*; And therefore the most innocent are most tryed. I have had occasion more then once to shew why they are most or so much tryed. First, for the exercise of their faith; Secondly, for the improvement of their patience; thirdly, to humble them; Fourthly, sometimes to set them up for examples to others; as the Apostle *James* speaks (*Chap.* 5. 10.) *Take my Brethren, the Prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction and of patience.* The Prophets have suffered affliction, and God hath let them suffer, that they might be patternes of suffering; and 'tis so in many other instances; Fifthly, God doth it to mortifie their corruptions; Sixthly, to prevent future transgressions, he hedgeth up their way

way with thornes; Seventhly, to diſcover or gaine a teſtimony of their ſincerity. They ſerve Chriſt to purpoſe, who can ſuffer while they ſerve, and bleed under his croſſe, while they ſweat under his yoke. Surely then, there is no concluding againſt any man that he is a ſon of *Belial*, or hath caſt off the yoke of Chriſt, becauſe Chriſt burdeneth him with his croſſe. Yet this was the great *Maxime*, which *Jobs* friends inſiſted upon, He muſt needs be a wicked man, becauſe the Lord had thruſt him downe, not man.

But when we ſee good men thruſt downe by the hand of God, there is a better uſe to be made of it, then to judge them, and that is to be watchfull over our ſelves, leſt we put a rod into the hand of God to chaſten us, or a ſword into his hand to wound us. For as Chriſt ſpake (*Luke* 23. 33.) *If it be thus done to the greene tree, what ſhall be done to the dry?* If Chriſt ſuffered ſo much, who was a greene flouriſhing fruit-bearing tree, what may we who are dry and barren trees? Or take the meere ſons of men, ſome of them comparatively to others, are as greene trees flouriſhing in grace and holineſſe, who yet are under ſore affliction; and if this be done to a greene tree, what ſhall be done to thoſe who are but dry barren fruitleſs trees, yea, trees that bring forth evill fruit. The Apoſtle (1 *Pet.* 4. 17.) gives a ſutable caution; *If judgement begin at the houſe of God* (he does not ſay at the Temple of Idolls, But if it begin at the houſe of God) *what will the end be of thoſe that obey not the Goſpel!* Let others looke to it when they ſee God afflicting his people, when they ſee God bringing ſuch troubles into his owne houſe, what troubles may they expect, who are indeed but a den of theeves, and whoſe houſes are, yea who themſelves are as a Cage of uncleane birds? Thus we ſee the great argument diſproved, which *Jobs* friends uſed to prove him wicked, becauſe *God did thruſt him downe, not man.* And, ſaith *Elihu*, this is it you ſay and boaſt of, as your wiſdome; but indeed you have not convinced *Job*, no not by this. What you have taken for a demonſtration, is but a fallacy. And though I might wave mine owne trouble in ſhewing that it is ſo, becauſe I am not the man (but ye are the men) to whom *Job* hath ſhaped his whole diſcourſe, yet I cannot forbeare to doe it, only I promiſe you, I will not tread in your ſteps, nor take up your method in doing it. That's the ſumme of the words which follow.

Verſ.

Verſ. 14. *Now he hath not directed his words againſt me, neither will I anſwer him with your ſpeeches.*

In this verſe *Elihu* ſpeakes Negatively in two things; Firſt, He tells us, that *Job* had not ſpoken profeſſedly, nor directly to him. Secondly, he tells us, how he would not deale with *Job*; that is, not as his friends before had done.

Now he hath not directed his words againſt me.

As if *Elihu* had ſaid, I confeſſe I have not been at all ſpoken to all this while, unleſſe in common with all the Auditory, and therefore might well enough looke upon my ſelfe as unconcern'd in this matter.

The word here uſed *to direct*, hath a great elegancy in it, and may be an alluſion; Firſt, to an Archer who aymes at, or directs his arrow to the marke. Secondly, to a Warrier, eſpecially a Commander in warre, who ſets his men in battel array againſt the enemy; As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *Job hath not aymed at me, nor hath he ordered or ſet his words in order to oppreſſe me. Job hath not drawne up his forces, nor ſet himſelfe in array againſt me, but againſt you; And ſo perhaps that hate and bitterneſs of ſpirit, which you have contracted by this long-continued debate with Job, hath given you occaſion prudently to withdraw, and forbeare the entertainment of any further diſcourſe with him. Yea, poſſibly ye are now fallen into a deep contempt of him, as a man forſaken of God, and therefore to be no more dealt with by man. But there is not the like reaſon for me to forbeare ſpeaking with him; ſeeing as he hath not at all oppoſed me, ſo I am not at all diſturb'd in my owne thoughts about him, nor is my ſpirit imbittered with any unjuſtifiable motions againſt him; and ſhall therefore enter the liſts of this diſputation, with a peaceable and quiet minde; or rather I ſhall* (*being a perſon every way unprejudic'd*) *doe my beſt endeavour to moderate and compoſe this great difference between you. Now he hath not directed his words againſt me*, &c.

ערך *digeſſit diſpoſuit, ordinavit, verbum bellicum de acie ordinanda dicitur.* Merc:

Hence note.

Firſt, *Our words ſhould be well ordered.*

They ſhould be drawne up like a wel diſciplin'd Army, in ranke and file. Confuſion in words is as bad as confuſion in things; Some heape up words, but they doe not rightly diſpoſe nor order them;

them; all they speake is out of joynt or frame. As a multitude or rout of men, doth not make an Army; we may see ten thousand men together, and yet no Army; why? because they are not in order or method, they are not under Discipline, and so they are but a confused throng, not an Host of men. And thus a great many words hudled and throng'd together, ate of no more force nor use, then a number of men without order; Method is very good in every thing we doe, especially in what we speake; A speech rightly ordered, is like an Army rightly marshaled. A word fitly spoken, fitly as to the season of it, and fitly as to the joynting and disposing of it (we may take in both in that place of *Solomon, A word fitly spoken*) *is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.*

Vult ostendere quod non loquitur quasi provocatus. Aquin:

There is another thing considerable in this former part of the verse, *Elihu* (as was lately intimated) spake thus to shew he came to the dispute unprovoked; *He hath not directed his words against me*; he hath not toucht me. Ye indeed have been provoked by his words, he hath touched you often and often to the quicke, and this hath made you touchy, angry and passionate, and you have growne into heats; but because he hath not directed his speech against me, therefore I shall come upon the stage, and enter this dispute with much coolness and temper. In a word, I bring no passion against his person, as you (being stung by his words) have done.

Hence note, Secondly.

They who are not provoked, have no reason to speake provokingly.

That's it which *Elihu* would have *Job* perswaded of; we use to say, *Speake when you are spoken to.* Then surely we are not to speake otherwise, then we are spoken to; we must not give rayling for rayling, much lesse may we rayle when rayling is not given.

He hath not directed his words against me.

Superbi quæ ad cōmunem omnium utilitatem dicuntur nunquam sibi dicta existimant. Gregor.

One of the Ancients Commenting upon this text, saith, *Elihu* discovers pride in this speech, *He hath not directed his speech against me*; As if *Elihu* disdained to take notice of what was spoken to them; which (saith he) is the humor of a proud man; who lookes not upon himselfe as engaged by any thing spoken, unlesse

unlesse you speak personally and directly to him; whereas Christ speaking personally to his Disciples only, would yet have all men see themselves spoken to (*Mark* 13. 34.) *What I say to you, I say to all, watch. Elihu* should have taken what *Job* spake to his three friends, as spoken to all that were present, and so might well enough have spared this complement, as my Author conceives. But I passe that as a curiosity; Especially because it appeares plainly enough, that *Elihu*, though the words were not spoken directly to him, yet did take himselfe to be much concerned; and therefore riseth up as a Moderator in this Controversie between *Job* and his three friends. *He hath not directed his words against me.*

Neither will I answer him with your speeches.

Mihi integrum est respondere & quidem longe, aliter & ex alio fundamento, licet me directè Jobus non oppugnaverit. Scult:

Non sequur vias vestras in respondendo, sed alias efficaciores inveniam. Aquin:

I will not goe your way, nor follow your example in this undertaking; I shall proceed upon other principles, and use other medium's then ye have done; such, I hope, as will be found much more effectuall, and attaine their end. We may take these words; *I will not answer him with your speeches*, two wayes; First, as their speeches had too little light of reason in them; Secondly, as their speeches had too much fire of passion in them. As if he had sayd, I will use milder words and stronger arguments; I utterly disapprove the course you have taken with him; and therefore I will neither insist upon your theame to condemne him for an hypocrite, nor use your argument to prove it, because God hath thus sorely afflicted him; for I hold that a meere Sophisme. *I will not answer him with your speeches*; That is, with speeches which have so much passion, and so little true reason in them, as to the poynt in hand. For though *Jobs* friends had spoken many things of much weight and reason considered abstractly, or in *Thesi*, yet when it came to the *hypothesis*, as appliable to *Jobs* speciall case, then their speeches had little or no weight in them. So that in this profession *Elihu* seemes to promise these two things.

First, That he would use stronger arguments then they had done; I will not use yours, that is, weake ones, I purpose to come better prepared to the Combate then you; For though *Elihu* doth sometimes use such arguments as they, yet he doth not use them to their end to prove that *Job* acted rebelliously, or like a

wicked

wicked man against God, as they did: but to shew, that he carried himselfe too highly, or over-confidently towards God. And this (as it appeares by the issue) tooke more upon *Job* then all his friends hard suspitions, charges, and accusations. This humbled him, this silenced him; he had nothing to returne, but sate downe convinced; and therefore *Elihu* dealt with him in more strength of reason and divine authority then they had done.

Secondly, When *Elihu* saith, *I will not answer him with your speeches*, he seemes to engage that he would deale mildly with him, or without passion; he would not use bitter words, but debate and argue the matter gently and meekly. For though *Elihu* gave *Job* many severe reproofes, yet alwayes in a more friendly manner, not to prove that he had done wickedly, but to convince him that he had spoken overboldly; or that while he was so zealous to defend his own innocency, he sometimes intrencht upon the soveraignty of God, in his eager and earnest desire of pleading his cause before him. And surely it was but need that *Job* should have a man of a milder temper sent in to speake to him, else his spirit might have been quite over-whelm'd and sunke. Nor was it without the speciall hand of God, that after this poore afflicted soule had been so hardly used, and so grievously censured by those rigid disputants, he should at last meete with a man more meeke and compassionate, in some measure, to mittigate and allay his sorrow.

First, In that *Elihu* saith, *I will not answer him with your speeches.*

Observe.

It is not good to imitate others in any thing they doe or speake which is not good.

We must not either act or speake by example, but by rule, or by example only so farre as it answers the rule. 'Tis dangerous treading in their steps who tread awry. When *Paul* found that *Peter* did not goe right, he was resolved not only not to follow him, but to reprove him (*Gal.* 2. 14.) Thus saith *Elihu*, here I will not write after your Coppy, nor take up directions from what you have done, for I see you have gone and done amisse.

Againe, When *Elihu* saith, *I will not answer him with your speeches.*

Note

Note Secondly.

What we speake should be our owne sence, not the sence of others, unlesse their sence, either of things or persons, be the same with ours.

Some pin their opinion upon the sleeves of others, and they will be just of the judgement of such a man; what he saith, they will say. As some expect that every one should be of their Judgement, and say as they say; they are *many Masters* (which the Apostle *James* forbids, *My Brethren, be not many Masters*, doe not take upon you to give the rule to all others, some are proud at this rate, they thinke themselves able to give the rule to all men) so not a few are so easie, that presently they will take up any thing as a rule from any Master; whereas we should not be so apt to follow, but labour to have the Judgment or reason of things in our selves, rather then to take it up upon trust. When *Luther* was much troubled about the dealings of God in the world, to see how matters went, and was saying within himselfe, Surely it were better things were carried thus and thus; while *Luther* (I say) was thus troubled, he thought he heard this word of reproofe from God; *O Martin, Martin, I see thou art very wise, thou canst give rules, even to God himselfe, but I am not a God easie to be led by men. I will not take thy Counsell, though I see thou hast an honest heart in what thou counsellest. I have a way of my owne, and I will have my owne way, though the world, yea, though good men, and my owne faithfull servants are grieved and mourne at it.* Man would appoint to God himselfe, but God will not model matters by mans wisdome, nor in his way. Thus in the present case (I only allude) it is not good for us when we heare what others say, presently to receive it, or take the impression from them; and so answer in their words, or vote their opinions, though they are wise and good men; *Elihu* takes the liberty to dissent, as in his opinion, so in his Method of proceeding with *Job*, I will answer, but it shall not be with your speeches, I will take my owne course.

Martine, Martine, tu valde sapis, sed ego non sum deus sequax.

Thirdly, Note.

The sayings and mistakes of others, should be our warnings not to doe the like.

Elihu observed where they missed as to the matter in hand,

he obſerv'd alſo wherein they miſſed, as to the manner of proceeding; and he obſerved both well, and wiſely to avoyd the like inconveniences; and thereupon profeſſed, *I will not anſwer him with your ſpeeches.*

Fourthly, Note.

We ſhould anſwer to every poynt and perſon with reaſon and ſweetneſſe, not with paſſion and bitterneſſe.

There is no convincing others with wrath; *The wrath of man* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *works not the righteouſneſſe of God,* (*James* 1. 20.) That is, wrath will never bring about the effect thoſe righteous things, or ends, which God would have us ayme at. The wrath of man puts him quite out of the way of righteouſneſſe, both out of the way of right ſpeaking, and of right acting. To ſhew much reaſon, and little paſſion, is our wiſdome. So the Apoſtle gives the rule (*2 Tim:* 2. 26.) *The ſervant of the Lord muſt not ſtrive*; he doth not meane it of bodily ſtriving; As if he had ſaid, he muſt not be a fighter. As when the Apoſtle ſaith (*1 Tim:* 3. 3.) *A Miniſter muſt not be a ſtriker*; It can hardly be thought he ſhould intend only, if at all, that Miniſters ſhould not be like groſsly boyſterous men, who are not ſo much as Civill in their behaviour; ſurely ſuch are farre enough off from a fitneſs to be received into the Miniſtry; therefore ſome expound the Apoſtle to the poynt in hand, he muſt be no ſtriker with his tongue in paſſion, anger, and wrath, no word-ſtriker. There is great ſtriking, yea, wounding with words. Though Miniſters muſt ſtrike and wound with the authority of God, yet not with their owne animoſities. They muſt wound the conſciences of ſinners, with the Word and Spirit of God, but not with their own wrathfull ſpirits; ſuch ſtrikers they may not be, nor may the ſervant of the Lord ſtrive thus, *but be gentle to all men, apt to teach*, yea, patient in teaching. It is a great exerciſe of patience to teach, with line upon line, precept upon precept; When we ſee little received or heeded, yet to inſiſt upon it, this is patience; *In meekneſſe inſtructing ſuch as oppoſe themſelves, if God peradventure will give repentance to the acknowledgement of the truth.* As the Apoſtle *James* exhorts (*Chap.* 1. 21.) *to receive the word with meekneſſe*; that's a moſt neceſſary rule in hearing the word; for many times the hearer is in a paſſion, there is ſuch

ſuch a ſtorme in his bowels that he cannot heare to purpoſe, therefore if any would receive the ingrafted word, they muſt receive it with meekneſſe. I ſay alſo the word ſhould be given out or ſpoken *in meekneſs*, though not with coldneſſe; I doe not ſay with coldneſſe or with a ſlightneſs of ſpirit, but with meekneſſe. And the truth is, milde ſpeaking or meekneſſe of ſpeech (as to the ſpirit and conſcience of the hearer) is not only moſt comfortable, but moſt prevailing. Meekneſſe ſhould be ſhewed, even where there is the greateſt zeale; and zeale then prevailes moſt, when there is moſt meekneſſe in it. The Apoſtle *Jude* ſaith, *Of ſome have compaſſion, making a difference, others ſave with feare*; That is, ſave them by preaching that which may make them afraid, ſcare them out of their ſins; but yet ſtill this is to be done in a ſpirit of meekneſſe. (*Gal.* 6. 1.) *If any one be over-taken in a fault* (what then? rayle on him, rage againſt him, and revile him, no, but ſaith the Apoſtle) *ye that are ſpirituall, reſtore ſuch a one with the ſpirit of meekneſſe; conſidering thy ſelfe, leſt thou alſo be tempted.* Bones muſt be ſet (to that the word which we tranſlate *reſtore* alludes) with a tender hand. Thoſe three things which are required in a good Chirurgion, or Bone-ſetter, are as neceſſary in a reprover, or in him that would reduce another from the error of his way. Firſt, He muſt have an *Eagles eye*, to diſcerne where the fault or fayling is. Secondly, A *Lyons heart*, to deale freely with the faulty, how great ſoever they are. Thirdly, A *Ladies hand*, to uſe them gently and tenderly. All which will more fully appeare, while

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Laſtly, From the example of *Elihu*, we collect and learne, that a good Moderator or compoſer of differences, muſt avoyd five things. Firſt, ſlightneſs of ſpirit and of ſpeech. It is not good to ſpeake lightly of little things, but it is a ſhame to ſpeake lightly of great things. Weighty matters muſt be handled weightily, and we ſhould put not a little finger, but our ſhoulders to them! Secondly, paſſionateneſs of ſpirit and of ſpeech, muſt be avoyded. That which hinders reaſon, had need be ſhut out while we are reaſoning. What a contradiction in the adjunct is it, to heare of an angry moderator? or to ſee a man ſet himſelfe to compoſe differences between others with a diſcompoſed ſpirit of his owne. Thirdly, partiality in ſpeaking, or the favouring of a party muſt be layd aſide; for as *Elihu* did not ſpare to tell

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Jobs friends their owne, so neither did he spare to tell *Job* his owne, he was not partiall on either side. What can be imagin'd more uncomely, then that he who stands between two should leane to any one? or that he who comes to be an umpire or a Judge, should make himselfe a party or an Advocate. Fourthly, he must avoyd timorousnesse, and not be daunted with what man shall say or can doe against him, while he is doing his duty. *The feare of man is a snare* (saith *Solomon*) That man had not need be in a snare himselfe, whose businesse it is to bring others out of the snares of error, whether in opinion or in practise. Fifthly, he must beware of an easinesse to be drawne aside, either by the perswasions or applauses of men. A Judge between others must keepe his owne standing.

Thus farre concerning these two verses, wherein *Elihu* is still carrying on his Preface, to prepare *Job* to receive attentively what he had to say. In the next place, *Elihu* turning to the standers by, signifies to them in what condition he found *Jobs* friends.

JOB,

JOB. Chap. 32. Vers. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.

They were amazed, they answered no more, they left off speaking.
When I had waited, (for they spake not, but stood still, and answered no more)
I said, I will answer also my part, I also will shew mine opinion.
For I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me.
Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent, it is ready to burst like new bottles.
I will speak, that I may be refreshed: I will open my lips and answer.

Elihu had spoken of his friends silence before, and here he returns to it againe, with a further addition and aggravation.

Vers. 15. *They were amazed, they answered no more, they left off speaking*, &c.

There are two opinions concerning the person who spake these words. First, Some referre them to the writer or penman of this Book, but I rather take them as the words of *Elihu* himselfe.

They were amazed.

The root signifies to be affected with a very passionate and strong feare, even such a feare as they are arrested with who flee or fall before their Enemies in battel. So the word is used (*Jer:* 50. 26.) *A sword is upon her mighty men, and they shall be dismayed.* Dismay or amazement, is the displacing, at least the disturbing of reason it selfe; *Elihu* shews how unable and unfit *Jobs* friends were to argue with him any further, seeing upon the matter, they had lost the use of their reason, and were as men crack-brain'd, or broken in their understanding. *They were amazed.*

חתו *cum pavorem affert, quo affici solent, qui ab hoste potentissimo superantur.*

They

They answered no more, they left off speaking, or

Speech was departed from them; there is a two-fold Exposition of that speech (*they left off speaking*) Some understand it passively, like that (*Luke* 12. 20.) *This night shall thy soule be required, or taken from thee*; thou shalt not freely deliver it up, but it shall be snatcht from thee; So here, their speech was taken from them; or by an unanswerable conviction, silence was imposed upon them. Mr *Broughton* renders; *They doe speake no more, speeches be departed from them.* How can they speake from whom speech is departed.

הטת יקו q.d *ab illis ablata sunt verba.*

We translate actively, *they left off speaking*, as implying a voluntary act, they gave a stop to themselves; either they were not able, or it was not fit for them to say any more. The Hebrew is, *They removed speech from themselves*, and so became as silent as if they could not speake at all. They were as mute as fishes. The following verse being of the same sence, I shall open that before I give the observations from this.

Vers. 16. *When I had waited (for they spake not but stood still, and answered no more)*

Job waited hoping they would speak somewhat worthy of themselves, worthy of that opinion and reputation which they had in the world for wisdome, but they deceived his expectation, He could not have nor heare a word more from them. This *Elihu* puts into a parenthesis (*for they spake not, but stood still, and answered no more*) He useth many words to the same purpose, to shew that there was somewhat extraordinary in their silence; *They spake not, their tongues stood still.* As speech is the image of the mind, and from the aboundance of the heart, so it is by the motion of the tongue. If the tongue stand still, discourse is stayd. Their mouths were stopt, as being either unable or ashamed to urge their accusations and arguments any further. *They stood still and answered no more.* It is said of those forward accusers of the woman taken in adultery (*John* 8. 9.) *That being Convicted by their owne Conscience, they went away one by one*; they shrunke away, having not a word to reply; And so did *Jobs* friends, who while they stood still, carried it as men unwilling to be heard or seene any more upon the place. *They were amazed*, &c.

Stare pro tacere.

First,

First, Hence note.

Amazement unfits us for argument.

Where wondering begins, disputing ends. *They were amazed, they answered no more.*

Secondly, Note.

The same men are sometimes so changed, that they can scarcely be knowne to be the same men.

Eliphaz sayd (*Chap:* 4. 2.) *Who can withhold himselfe from speaking?* He was so forward that he could not be kept from words, but now he had not a word in his keeping, speech was withheld, or departed.

Thirdly, Note.

False grounds or positions, cannot be alwayes maintain'd.

God will supply both matter and forme, arguments and words, to confirme his owne truth; they who are in the right, shall not want reason to back it: but they who are in the wrong, may quickly find a stop, and have no more to say. The Apostles were weake, because unwilling in a bad cause (2 *Cor:* 13. 8.) *We can doe nothing against the truth, but for the truth*; and they who are willing to be against the truth, shall be weake and not able long to doe any thing against it (*They spake no more*) *As God gives a banner*, (that is, outward power) *to them that feare him, that it may be displayed, because of the truth* (Psal: 60. 4.) So he gives wisdome and understanding (that is, inward power) for the maintaining of the truth. *In thy majesty ride prosperously because of the truth* (Psal: 45. 4.) As Christ who is truth, and the giver forth of truth, so they who are undertakers for truth, shall ride and prosper. Truth may be borne downe by power, and out-fac'd by impudence, but it cannot be overcome. *Never feare to undertake a good Cause; and ever feare to undertake a bad oue, for it will be slur'd at last.* Truth may be opposed, but truth-defenders shall never be ashamed, nor want a tongue to speake for it. Christ (*Math:* 10. 17.) warnes his Disciples what entertainment they were like to find in the world; *They shall deliver you up to Rulers, ye shall be brought before Governours and Kings for my sake*; But he withall encourageth them; *Take no thought*

what

what ye shall speak, or what ye shall answer. For some might say, What if we should be called in question for the truths of the Gospel? we are willing to burne for them (as that Martyr said) but we feare we cannot dispute for them. Well, saith Christ, *take no thought what you shall speak, for it shall be given you in the same houre.* God himselfe by his Spirit will prompt you, he will whisper such things into your eares, as all your opposers shall not be able to gainsay. Indeed we see some men of corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the truth (as the Apostle gives their Character) who have courage enough to set forth lyes, and slander the truth, who straine their wits to the utmost, and (as the Prophet speakes, (*Jer: 9. 3.*) *bend their tongues like their bow for lyes.* But let them remember what the Apostle sayd of such as they (*2 Tim: 3. 8.*) *Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so doe these also resist the truth*; but (*v. 9.*) *they shall proceed no further, for their folly shall be made manifest to all men*; That is, shortly all shall see that these men have but playd the fooles: we may say of all those who hold wild raunting opinions, they shall proceed no further, though they act highly against the truth now, yet stay but a while, and they will have nothing to answer or returne, they will have empried their quiver, and quite spent their powder, you shall heare no more of them.

From that 16th verse, where *Elihu* addeth, *I waited (for they spake not but stood still, and answered no more)*

Observe, First.

It is our wisdome and our duty to stay our time before we put our selves out upon business.

It is good to wait; God himselfe is not hasty upon us, he waits to be gracious, and we must wait our season to be serviceable; *Elihu* did not presently engage. The providences of God, and the Exigency of things, must put us on, we must not put our selves on. Christ tells us (*Math: 9. 38.*) *The harvest is great, and the labourers few, pray therefore the Lord of the harvest that he would thrust forth labourers into his harvest*; he doth not say, *pray that labourers would thrust forth themselves into the harvest*, or run into it before they are sent, but pray the Lord of the harvest that he would thrust forth labourers; that is, that he would powerfully encline their hearts to the worke, whom he hath fitted

fitted and prepared for it. And as untill we are, at least, both competently prepared, and fairely enclined to that or any other good worke, 'tis best for us to waite; so when once we are prepared and enclined, 'tis best for us, without delay, to set upon the worke; *Elihu* did so, as appeares in the next verse.

Vers. 17. *I said also I will answer my part, I will shew my opinion.*

Now *Elihu* addresseth to his worke, his duty; and in this with the verses following to the end of the Chapter, we have, first, his resolvednesse to speak, *I said I will answer for my part*, &c. Secondly, his ability, readinesse and furniture to speake (*v. 18.*) *For I am full of matter*, &c. Thirdly, we have the motives that prest him to speak, or that he was exceedingly prest to it in the latter end of the 18th verse, as also *v. 19, 20. My spirit within me Constraineth me. Behold my belly is as wine which hath no vent*, &c. *I will speake that I may be refreshed.* Fourthly, in the two last verses, he tells us what caution, yea what conscience he meant to use in speaking (*v. 20.*) *Let me not I pray you accept any mans person: neither let me give flattering titles unto man*, &c.

I said I will answer for my part, &c.

Now you have done, I will begin; those words, *I said*, are not in the Hebrew text explicitely, yet are well understood. I will answer *for my part*, that is, (as some conceive, the force of the phrase) I will answer with my strength, and might, I will put my shoulders to it; but better Grammarians conclude, that the word imports, A mans share or portion in any worke to be done, rather then the strength which the workman useth or puts forth in doing it. And so the sence is plaine, as if *Elihu* had said, they have done their part, they have gone to the utmost of their line; now I see it falls to my turne to speak, and I will do what falls to my turne, *I will answer also for my part.*

Illud quod alii qui partem interpretantur pro mea virili parte aut pro viribus, latiné potius dictum est, quam ad germanam vocis significationem. Pined:

I also will shew my opinion.

We had these words in the negative at the 6th verse; There *Elihu* sayd, *I was afraid and durst not shew you my opinion*; But here, as also before (*v. 10.*) *Elihu* had taken courage and was

reſolved to *ſhew his opinion*. I ſhall not ſtay upon any opening of this clauſe, only I ſhall note two or three things briefely from it, as connected with the former verſe. There we had *Elihu* waiting, here we have him purpoſing to ſpeake.

Hence note.

They who conſider and waite before they ſpeake, ſpeake moſt prevailingly, moſt weightily.

It was long ere *Elihu* ventured to ſpeake, but when he did, he did it to purpoſe and with full effect. Thatwhich comes from our owne heart, is moſt like to take upon the hearts of others; they ſpeake as much from their hearts as with their tongues, whom we ſee long waiting before we heare them ſpeaking. And therefore, it is not good, no not for good ſpeakers, to be ſpeaking before they have been waiting; many through haſt bring forth untimely births, and unripe fruit; *Elihu* could ſay, *I have waited*, before he ſayd, *I will anſwer for my part*.

Secondly, Note.

We ought to obſerve order in ſpeaking, and act our proper part.

I will anſwer for my part (ſaith *Elihu*) or my turne is come to anſwer. The Apoſtle *Paul* gives this rule at large (1 *Cor:* 14. 28, 29, 30.) He would have no Interruption, no confuſion in Church-meetings, or Church-ſpeakings.

Thirdly, When he ſaith, *I will anſwer alſo for my part, I alſo will ſhew mine opinion.*

Note.

He that hath received a gift or talent, ſhould make uſe of it, and not hide it.

It is good to be doing our part, and ſhewing our opinion where we may be uſefull. Some love to act other mens parts rather then their owne, and to intrude into Provinces which are not theirs. But whatſoever our hand findes to doe (as *Solomon* ſpeakes, *Eccl:* 9. 10.) that is, whatſoever is, as *Elihu* here calls it, our part, that we ſhould doe *with all our might*. More was given about uſing our talent and ſhewing our opinion at the 10th verſe of this Chapter, whether I referre the reader.

Fourthly, *Elihu* was here but an auditor, not a diſputant, not a party, he came in only upon the by; yet having received a word he utters it.

Hence note.

Every man ſhould thinke himſelfe Concern'd to ſpeake for the truth, when 'tis wronged, and doe his beſt to right it.

Or we ſhould take all occaſions and ſeaſons of doing good by our words as well as by our workes. As it is not good to outrun providence, ſo to neglect or foreſlow it is not good.

Laſtly, Obſerve.

What others fayle in, we ſhould labour to ſupply in the cauſe of God, and for his truth.

It is a proverbiall ſpeech among the Hebrewes; *Where there is not a man, there be thou a man*; That is, if we ſee any unable to carry on and goe thorow-ſtitch with the worke before them, we ſhould lend a hand to helpe and ſupply them; thus ſaith *Elihu*, *I will anſwer for my part, I alſo will ſhew mine opinion*. And it ſeemes (by that which follows) *Elihu* did to, not only to anſwer his duty, but to empty and eaſe his ſpirit. For

Ubi non eſt vir, ſis tu vir eſto.

In the 18th, 19th, and 20th verſes, he gives us that further account of his interpoſition about this controverſie.

Verſ. 18. *For I am full of matter.*

Yea I am under a mighty Conſtraint; there is a kinde of force upon me, *The Spirit within me Conſtraineth me.*

I am full of matter.

The Original is, *I am full of words*; yet of more then words, as appeares in the following part of this Chapter; therefore we tranſlate, *I am full of matter*; that is, I am full of ſuch words as are materiall; words of truth, words of ſoberneſſe: I am full of ſuch words as will carry with them a Conviction home to thy Conſcience O *Job*, & ſilence all thy complaints. Or as if *Elihu* had ſaid to *Jobs* friends, Though ye have ſpent your ſtore upon *Job*, yet I have ſtore and plenty by me to ſpend upon him. Thus he reflects upon them as ſcanty and ſhort in their undertaking; your Lamps have ſpent their oyle, you have emptied your veſſels; ſo have not I, *I am full of matter*.

Cum ait ſe plenum, amicorum impiam notare videtur. Pined:

The

The Spirit within me Constraineth me.

צוק *in Hiphil anxit, angustovit pressit.*

The text is; *My spirit in my belly Constraineth me.* Master *Broughton* renders, *My bellyes spirit doth press me:* The Seventy render, *The spirit of my belly destroyeth me.* A Greek translater saith, *My spirit within me sets me on fire,* or, *I am all in a flame.* The word which we render *Constraine,* signifies to press very sore (*Judges* 14. 17.) *And it came to passe the seventh day, that he told her, because she lay sore upon him, or constrained him.*

συνκαιωι *comburit.* Sym.

It may be questioned, whose spirit, or what spirit it was that Constrained *Elihu?*

Some Expound it of the Spirit of God; he dictates both words and matter to me. Master *Calvin* seemes to Comply with this Exposition; *God hath printed such a marke in the doctrine of Elihu, that the heavenly Spirit is apparent in his mouth; God* (saith *Elihu*) *hath put his Seale to what I have to say, therefore doe not receive it as the word of a mortall man,* the Spirit of God Constraines me. *Paul* useth a word in the Greeke of like significancy (2 *Cor.* 5. 14.) *The love of Christ Constraineth me, it presseth and overbeareth me;* I am not able to get out of the power of it.

Againe, Others understand it of his owne spirit, yet acted by the Spirit of God (*Prov:* 29. 11.) *A foole uttereth all his spirit;* we translate, *all his minde;* the spirit pressing *Elihu* was his mind carried strongly or resolvedly bent upon this business. The strong inclination or disposition of a mans mind to any thing good or bad, is in Scripture language called *his Spirit. The Spirit within me.* The Hebrew is,

Spiritus ventris est πλεροφορια & alacritas urgens & existimulans ad loquendum. Coc:

The spirit of my belly; Which forme of speech notes only that which is most internall, or lyeth closest within us. *Solomon* saith of the words of wisdome (*Prov:* 22. 18.) *It is a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee;* The Original is, *in thy belly.* (*John* 7. 38.) *Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water;* That is, out of his inward man; there shall be a spirit in his spirit (for this Christ spake of the Spirit which should be given) and the same word is used of the wicked man (*Job* 15. 35.) *His belly* (that is, his mind or understanding) *prepareth deceit.* And *Solomon* (*Cant:* 7. 2.) speaking of the Church, saith, *Her belly is like an heap of wheat set about with lillies;* That is, she is

is big with holy thoughts and conceptions, as a woman great with child, ready to be delivered. A gracious heart is continually meditating and conceiving holy things, which it brings forth, and is as it were delivered of, upon any good occasion. *The spirit within me Constraineth me.*

What *Elihu* had thus spoken in plaine termes by way of assertion in this verse, he illustrates by way of similitude or allusion in the next.

Vers. 19. *Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent, it is ready to burst like new bottles.*

חמר חדת *vinum novum vel mustum, cui non est ademptum obthuraculum ut exhalet.* Iun:

Elihu prosecutes the same thing in another way; and to shew how troublesome it was to refraine speaking any longer, his thoughts being not only too many, but too working to be enclosed in so narrow a roome as his owne breast, he compares them to wine, or to new wine, which will either find or make its way out.

The whole similitude is exceeding elegant, First, he compares his thoughts, or the matter he had in his mind to wine. Secondly, he compares his soule or spirit to bottles, his inward man was the vessell that held this wine. Thirdly, he compares his long silence to the stople or Corke of the bottle. Fourthly, he compares that trouble and griefe of mind which this forbearance to speake brought upon him, to the working which is in a bottle so stopt, or having no vent. Fifthly, he compares his intended speaking to the opening of the bottle which gives it vent.

Behold, my belly is as wine; that is, the thoughts of my belly *are as wine.*

The Chaldee Paraphrase saith, *as new wine,* which is full of spirits, and being stopt is ready to breake the bottle; which shews the mighty force which *Elihu's* thoughts had upon him, they would out, there was no stopping of them. Christ saith, (*Math:* 9. 17.) *No man putteth new wine into old bottles,* but men put new wine into new bottles; why? because they are stronger, and so more fit to preserve the wine; *My belly is as wine.*

It

It is ready to burst like new bottles.

אוב *pro ure non alibi repe-ritur, sæpe pro pythone; quod qui hoc ariolâdi genere uterentur velut ex u-triibus vocem emitterent. Un'o a Græcâ ἐγγαστριμυθοι dicuntur.* Merc:

The word which we render *bottles*, is never used in Scripture elsewhere in this sence, but it is often used to signifie Wizards, or such as have familiar Spirits (*Isa:* 8. 19. *Isa:* 29. 4.) because they who used those hellish arts by compact with the Devill, did speak out of their belly, & so as it were, out of a bottle. Now, saith *Elihu*, *My belly is as new wine that hath no vent, and it is ready to burst like new bottles*; even new bottles will break, unless the new wine have some vent. And because though new bottles be stronger then old to keepe in wine, yet the wine may be so strong as to breake them, therefore *Elihu* here-by shewes that his desire or necessity of speaking was so urgent upon him, that though he should strengthen himselfe, yea strive with himselfe as much as he could to refraine from speaking, yet speake he must.

I am full of matter, &c.

Observe, First.

A man should not speak, especially in weighty matters, till himselfe be well stored with matter.

Secondly, Observe.

When some vessells are drawne quite dry, and instruments spent and worne to the stumps, when they can neither doe nor say any more, then God fills up and furnisheth others for his purpose.

There was not a drop more to be squeez'd out of *Jobs* friends, but *Elihu* was a full bottle (*Mal:* 2. 15.) there is a residue of the Spirit; God hath more Spirit or spirituall abilities to dispose of, and bestow then he hath yet disposed of to, or bestowed upon any one or all the sons of men.

Thirdly, Note.

God can furnish Instruments with proper gifts for the worke which he Calls them to.

Here was a man Cut out on purpose for this worke, he was Clothed with a spirit of prudence and courage, as well as with a spirit of discerning. We have a wonderfull Example of this in *Luther*,

Luther, who came forth against all the powers of the papacy. What a spirit had he? his was a spirit of might, his spirit Constrained him, his belly was like a bottle full of new wine, there was no stopping of it. Others would have been daunted and cowed downe with the tenth of that opposition which he met with, but he was bold as a Lyon, who turneth not aside.

Againe, Why did *Elihu* come forth? why did his spirit constraine him? what made his belly like wine? Some charge him with pride and arrogancy of spirit, as if he did it out of vaine ostentation, to shew his parts and gifts, to set himselfe above those other Worthyes who had dealt and discoursed with *Job* before. But we have reason enough (considering what he spake, and what the issue of his speaking was) to determine, that he was moved with a zeale for God, and to doe good to *Job*, not with a spirit of pride, to shew his learning, wit or wisdome among men; and therefore we finde that when the whole matter was brought to an issue, and God himselfe came to deale with *Job* and his three friends, God commends *Job*, and reproves his three friends, but there is no reproofe upon *Elihu*. Now for as much as God himselfe doth not charge him, what hath man to doe to charge him? Not only charity but reason and judgement command us to thinke his designe honest, and his aymes sincere, while he professeth under so vehement an impulse or impression upon his spirit to engage and speake in this matter.

Hence note, Thirdly.

To see truth ill handled, should fill our spirits with much zeal for God.

That was it which drew *Elihu* to this engagement, he saw those men (though good men) had put a disguise upon the things and dealings of God; and if men disguise the truth, and maintaine error, if they deface the doctrines of faith and pure worship, with their owne phansies and false glosses, it should kindle a holy fire and fervour of spirit in us, to assert and vindicate the truth. Our spirit within us (in all such cases) should Constraine us.

Fifthly: In that *Elihu* was so Constrained and pressed in spirit, as wine which hath no vent, or as a woman with Child ready to travell.

Note.

It is a paine not to ſpeake when we have much to utter, and much minde to utter it.

When *Elihu* was full he had a Conſtraint upon him to vent his opinion. *David* ſaith (*Pſal: 39. 1, 2, 3.*) *I held my peace, even from good words*; (he did not only forbeare idle and evill diſcourſe, but refrain'd from good) but it was a trouble to him not to ſpeak, eſpecially not to ſpeak good words; therefore he adds, *My heart waxed hot within me. Jeremy* found it no eaſie worke to keepe in words; yea, he deſcribes himſelfe as much pained by not delivering his minde, as a woman is when not delivered in child-birth (*Jer: 20. 9.*) *Then ſaid I, I will not make mention of him, nor ſpeak any more in his name, but his word was in my heart as a burning fire ſhut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not ſtay.* There was wine, new wine in his belly, yea there was a fire within him; as we may be weary with ſpeaking, ſo with not ſpeaking, or forbearing to ſpeake, (*Jer: 4. 19.*) *My bowels, my bowels, I am pained at the very heart, my heart maketh a noiſe in me, I cannot hold my peace.* Read him in the like trouble upon the ſame occaſion (*Jer: 6. 11.*) *Eliphaz* (Chap: 4. 2.) was thus preſſed, *Who can withhold himſelfe from ſpeaking?* 'Tis a great paine, to be mind-bound, or not to deliver our mind, when our mindes are full and we full of deſire to deliver it.

Sixthly, When he ſaith, *I am Conſtrain'd, I am like a bottle ready to burſt*, It teacheth us.

The Spirit of God doth ſo over-power ſome men, that they cannot containe.

The Phariſees and high Prieſts, thought to ſtop up the Apoſtles, thoſe bottles full of the new wine of the myſteries of Chriſt, and therefore gave them Counſell, yea a command to ſpeake no more in his name. At the 10th verſe, they ſaid of ſome in a common ſence, *Theſe men are full of new wine*, that is, they are drunken; but the truth was, they were full of the Spirit, full of Goſpel-truths, and like bottles full of new wine they could not hold. And when the Phariſees and high Prieſts would have ſtopt up thoſe bottles, and charged them that they ſhould ſpeak no more

more in the name of Jeſus; they anſwered, *Whether it be meet to obey God or man judge ye; for we cannot but ſpeak the things that we have ſeene and heard*: you may cut out our tongues if ye will, take away the organs of ſpeech ye may, but otherwiſe we cannot but ſpeak. As it is ſaid of Chriſt, they could not reſiſt the Spirit by which he ſpake; ſo they were not able to reſiſt the Spirit by which the Apoſtles ſpake. Some have ſuch Impulſes from the Devill upon them, that they cannot but ſpeak boldly as well as wickedly and blaſphemouſly; it is ſtrange to ſee what ſome both old and new Impoſtors have done, their bellyes have been like bottles full of new wine, they have even burſt to vent their wicked opinions. *Bernard* diſcourſing of ſuch an Opinioniſt in his time, ſaith, *He hungers and thirſts for Auditors, into whoſe boſomes he might empty himſelfe, and powre out all his ſentiments, that he might appeare who and how great a man he was. He careth not to teach thee what thou knoweſt not, nor to be taught by thee what he doth not know; but that himſelfe may be known to know what he knoweth.* Now if there be ſuch preſſures upon the ſpirits of vaine men to be delivered of their falſe and avery conceptions: How much more when a man hath ſtrong impreſſions from the Spirit of God ('tis diſcernable by the matter that comes out of the bottle, whether it be the wine of *Sodome*, or of *Sion*) is he unable to containe himſelfe? Such a man muſt ſpeake not only to inſtruct and refreſh others, but (as it followeth in the next verſe) to eaſe and refreſh himſelfe.

Eſurit & ſitit auditores quibus omne quod ſentit effundat, quibus qualis & quantus ſit innoteſcat. Non curat te docere vel a te doceri quod neſcit, ſed ut ſcire ſciatur quod ſcit. Bernard:

Verſ. 20. *I will ſpeak that I may be refreſhed.*

The Hebrew is, *That I may breath*, or, *I may have roome.* The word properly ſignifies, that which is enlarged or widened; when a veſſell is full, and you draw ſome of the liquor out of it, then there is room; So ſaith *Elihu*, *I will ſpeak, that I may be refreſhed, or have roome.*

I will open my lips, and anſwer.

To open the lips is a preparation to ſpeaking; Chriſt opened his mouth and ſpake; ſpeaking is begun with opening the mouth: a man may open his lips for other ends then for ſpeaking, and a dumbe man opens his lips who cannot ſpeake, yet no man can

רוח latus dilatatus, recreatio loquax & mihi latum erit. i.e. *erit mihi dilatio recreatio.* Merc: *Per verba exacerbata interiorem fervorem & ab anxietate deſiderij requiem.* Aquin:

ſpeak without opening his lips: and why did *Elihu* open his lips? it was to refreſh himſelfe.

Hence note.

He that ſpeaks his minde, eaſeth his minde.

'Tis good to ſpeak to refreſh our ſelves, but 'tis much better to ſpeak for the refreſhing of others; yea, we ſhould ſpeak (though to our own paine) that we may refreſh others, and ſpeak away their paine (*Iſa:* 50. 4.) *Thou haſt given me the tongue of the learned, to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to him that is weary*; They are good words indeed which refreſh both the ſpeaker, and the hearers. But the deſigne of ſpeaking is rather for the refreſhing of hearers, then of the ſpeaker. How vainly then doe they ſpend their breath in ſpeaking, who ſpeak without any deſigne of good, or of refreſhing, either to themſelves or others, who ſpeak only to be applauded and taken notice of, to be cryed up and commended for eloquent ſpeakers. Theſe are ſad deſignes of ſpeaking; better be a ſtammerer, then ſuch an Orator, better be dumb and not able to ſpeake, then to ſpeak for ſuch ends, with greateſt ability. Unleſſe we ſpeak, that others may be informed, converted, comforted, edified, ſaved, ſome way or other bettered, we were as good hold our peace and ſay nothing. The holy Apoſtle profeſſed (1 *Cor:* 14. 19.) *I had rather ſpeak five words with my underſtanding, that I might teach others alſo, then ten thouſand words in an unknowne tongue.* To ſpeak ſtrange words in an unknowne tongue, may gaine us a name among men; But neither are any ſoules gained, nor doth any ſoule gaine the worth of one farthing in ſpirituall knowledge by hearing thouſands and ten thouſands of words ſpoken in an unknowne tongue. We ſhould thinke all thoſe words even as loſt to us, by which we have not, at leaſt, intended the gaine and good of others. But ſuppoſe, while we ſincerely intend the good of others in ſpeaking, they get no good by what is ſpoken; yet it ſhall not be without good to us: for as *Elihu* here hoped, ſo may we to be refreſhed by it; for *when a man hath diſcharged his duty to God and man, in ſpeaking his mind, it cannot but be a great eaſe to his minde.* *Elihu* had a great duty upon him, to moderate and ſet this buſineſſe right between *Job* and his friends, to take downe that height of ſpirit that was in *Job*, and to allay that ſharpneſſe and

and bitterneſſe of ſpirit that was in his friends. When we have in ſincerity diſcharged our duty to all others, and done that which our Conſciences charge upon us, how doth it quiet and refreſh our minds? and how many have been burdened and diſquieted in their ſpirits for neglecting this duty: They (I ſay) who neglecting to ſpeake when it was incumbent upon them to ſpeak, and the cauſe of God required it, have found it a burden upon them long after. When *Mordecai* had acquainted Queene *Eſter* with the ſad condition of the *Jewes*, (whoſe deſtruction *Haman* had plotted) and adviſed the meſſenger to *charge her, that ſhe ſhould goe in unto the King to make ſupplication unto him, and to make requeſt before him for her people* (Eſt: 4. 8.) She returned him anſwer by the ſame meſſenger, that ſhe could not doe this without running the hazzard of her owne life (*v.* 10, 11.) yet *Mordecai* replyed (*v.* 14.) *If thou Altogether holdſt thy peace* (let the danger be what it will) *at this time, then ſhall their enlargement and deliverance ariſe to the Jewes from another place, but thou and thy fathers houſe ſhall be deſtroyed: and who knowes whether thou art come to the kingdome for ſuch a time as this?* As if he had ſayd, It is thy duty to ſpeake for thy people at ſuch a time as this, and therefore if thou doeſt not breake through all difficulties to ſpeake, thy ſilence will coſt thee deare, probably thou wilt looſe thy owne life by it, or if not, then certainly thy conſcience will trouble and vex thee for it as long as thou liveſt. Many offend in ſpeaking, and we may in many caſes offend both God and man, yea our ſelves too (when we ſee our opportunities loſt) by neglecting to ſpeake.

JOB. Chap. 32. Vers. 21, 22.

Let me not, I pray you, accept any mans person: neither let me give flattering titles unto man.

For I know not to give flattering titles: in so doing, my Maker would soon take me away.

IN these two verses *Elihu* concludes (in which he had continued long) the Preface to his following discourse and procedure with *Job*; Here also he acquaints us in what manner he meant to proceed with him; about which we may consider two things.

First, His resolvednesse or the setlednesse of his purpose what course to take. Secondly, the reasons which moved him to it. The former he expresseth negatively in the 21th verse, and that in two points.

First, *He would not accept any mans person.*

Secondly, *He would not give flattering titles unto man.*

These two negatives (as the negative precepts in the Law of God) are to be understood with their affirmatives. *I will not accept any mans person*, is, I will have and give an equall, or neither a more nor lesse (to the best of my understanding) then a due regard to every mans person. And, *I will not give flattering titles*; that is, I purpose to speak plainly, I will not complement men, but doe my best to accomplish the matter. And as he assures us how he will proceed in this 11th verse, so

Secondly, He gives us the reasons of this his intended impartiall, plaine, and down-right proceeding in the 22d. These reasons are two-fold.

First, He would not doe otherwise, because he could not with any content to himselfe. It was against the very graine of his spirit to doe otherwise; his disposition lay a quite contrary way, he was a man of another genius or temper, a man of another mould and make, then to doe such low and unworthy things, as accepting the persons of, or giving flattering titles unto men. He is expresse in this (*v.* 22.) *I know not to give flattering titles.*

Second-

Secondly, He would not because he durst not *give flattering titles, nor accept the persons of men.* The danger and dammage he should incurre by doing so, kept him from doing so, as wel as his owne indisposition to it. He should lay himselfe open and obnoxious to the wrath of God by such seeking the favour of men; as appeares in the close of the verse; *In so doing my Maker would soon take me away.*

Thus you have the parts and purpose of these words; I shall now give a more distinct explication and account of them.

Vers. 21. *Let me not, I pray you, accept any mans person*; or, *let me not now.*

So that particle is rendred (*Job* 5. 1.) *Call now, if there be any that will answer thee*; yet 'tis an Adverb of beseeching or intreating; and therefore we render wel, *Let me not, I pray you*; which rendring seemes to have in it these two things. As if *Elihu* had sayd,

נא *adverbium seu particula obsecrantis, seu ad hortandi, ut fodes, amabo, latinè.*

First, Expect not that I should, nor believe that I will doe any such thing, as the accepting of persons, or the giving of flattering titles.

Secondly, Be not offended if I doe not, be not angry with me, if I deale plainly with you; pray give me leave to use my owne freedome and liberty when I am speaking; for I am resolved to doe it, and not to accept the persons of men, nor to give them flattering titles. The words may be rendred also in a direct negation, *Verily I will not accept any mans person.* But I shall keep to our reading.

Non accipiam, ut sit אל *pro* לא *quæ enallage insolens non est.* Drus.

Let me not, I pray you, accept any mans person.

The Hebrew is, *Let me not lift up any mans person*; or (which the Apostle forbids) *Let me not have any mans person in admiration*; I will not over-reverence any man, nor give him a respect beyond himselfe. The word which we render *person*, is in Hebrew, *face*, *Let me not lift up the face of a man*, or wonder at any mans face, as the Septuagint often render this phrase. And it is usuall to put the face, or the countenance for the person, because the face declares the person and shews who the mans is; and it is elegantly expressed by the face, because accepting of persons, importeth a respect to others for their outside, or in consideration

פני איש

on of some externall glory. *Let me not accept the face of any man, or person*, let him be who he will. The originall word *ish*, most properly signifieth an eminent, or honourable man, a learned or wise man. As if *Elihu* had sayd, I will not accept or lift up the face of a man, though he be (*ish*) a man never so much lifted up, and exalted above his brethren. To accept the person of a man, is not a fault in it selfe; for as our persons are accepted of God, so ought our persons to be accepted with one another; yea, it is a duty to accept the person of a man; that is, to give him favour, honour, and due respect. Not only civility and humanity, but religion it selfe calls us to give outward reverence to them who excell, and are superior, either to others or our selves. God himselfe is sayd to accept the persons of his people first, and then their sacrifices or services. And we ought to accept the persons of men according to their differences in place and power, especially according to those gifts and Graces, which shine in them. Therefore when *Elihu* saith, *Let me not, I pray you, accept any mans person*, his meaning is, let me not doe it in prejudice to the cause or truth that is before us. Then we are properly and strictly sayd *to accept persons*, when in any matter, businesse, or poynt of controversie, our eyes are so dazel'd or blinded by external appearances, that we have respect rather to the person of the man, then to the matter, or the truth of the cause in hand. So then, this sin of accepting persons, is alwayes committed when we are more swayed by, or when there is more attributed to persons then to things, that is, when the mans worth is more looked to then the worth or merit of his cause; or further, when something in a person which hath no respect to the goodnes, or badnes of his cause, moves us to give him more or lesse then is meete, this is sinfully to accept or respect a person. Thus *Elihu* acquits himselfe from all those bonds and blinds which his respect to those worthy persons before him, might lay upon him. They were ancient and grave men, they were wise and good men, he had a great respect for them, he owed much reverence to them, considering their age and gravity, their degree and dignity; yet he owed a greater respect to God, and to the truth, then to their persons, and was thereupon resolved, (though he had many and great temptations to doe it,) *not to accept the persons of men.*

Hence

Hence note.

To accept persons in prejudice to the cause or truth before us, is a high offence both to God and good men.

'Tis so in a double notion; First, in the act of it, because we doe that which in it selfe is not right, nor according to the mind of God. Secondly, in the issue, consequence or effects of it, because by respecting persons, we are endangered to many other sins. While *Solomon* only saith (*Prov.* 28. 21.) *To have respect of persons is not good*; his meaning is, 'tis very evill, 'tis starke naught. And the reason which he gives of the evill of it, is not only because the act in it selfe is evill, but because the issue and consequence of it is worse; For, (saith that Scripture) *for a piece of bread that man will transgresse*; That is, he that respects persons, will turne aside from Justice, for his owne advantage, though it be very small, even for a piece of bread. The Prophet complaines of those (*Amos* 2. 6.) *who sold the righteous for silver, and the poore for a paire of shoes.* They who have sold or given up themselves to this crooked Spirit of respecting persons, will not sticke to sell both the persons of the righteous, and the most righteous causes, not only (as the Prophet saith) for a paire of shoes, but (as we say) for a paire of shoe-buckles. *They will soone judge amisse of things, who have respect to persons, and they alwayes looke beside the cause, who looke too much upon the face*; nothing should weigh with us in judgement, but truth or right, and that in a five-fold opposition.

First, Truth and right must weigh with us in opposition to relation. When a Brother, or a neere kinsman be in the cause, we must not decline, nor be biassed from the truth, yea though it be on his side to whom we have no relation, but that of *man*.

Secondly, We must keep to the truth, and doe justice in opposition to friendship. Though he be my friend, my old friend, and my fathers friend, I must not respect him, if truth stand upon the other side, upon the side of the meereſt stranger. It was anciently sayd, *Socrates is my friend, and Plato is my friend, but truth is more my friend, and therefore I will stick to that.* *Amicus Socrates, Amicus Plato, sed magis amica veritas.*

Thirdly, We must hold to truth, in opposition to or notwithstanding the hatred of men; suppose a man beares us ill will, yea in other things hath wronged us, yet if his present cause be

righteous, we must doe him right: We may not bring in our particular wrongs or quarrells upon any cause, but that about which the wrong or quarrel riseth. They shew the purest love to righteousnesse, who act righteously towards those that hate them, and will not wrong those who have attempted to oppresse and ruine them. A true lover of Justice will do to others as himselfe would have others doe to him, yea though they have not done to him, as they would be done to.

Fourthly, We must stand to truth in opposition to riches and worldly abomdance; riches usually find more friends and favourers, then righteousnesse doth. And 'tis usuall to favour the rich more then the righteous. How often is truth on the poore mans side over-ballanced by his adversaries purse. But O how poore are they in spiritualls and morals, who thus respect the persons of the rich!

Fifthly, We must judge for truth in opposition to worldly greatnes and power; and that in a two-fold consideration.

First, Though men have a power to reward, and preferre us, to doe great things for us, yet this should not draw us aside; woe to those who respect the greatnesse of the person instead of the goodnesse of the cause: yet how many are there who care not how bad a great mans cause is, if he will but engage to do them good: yea some great men look upon themselves as much undervalued, if they be not favoured in their cause (how bad soever it be) because they are able to doe them good who favour it. *Balak* tooke it very ill at *Balaams* hands, when he seemed unmoved by his ability to advance and reward him. *Did not I earnestly send for thee, to call thee? Wherefore camest thou not to me, am I not able indeed to promote thee to honour?* (Numb: 22. 37.) And wilt not thou serve my interest, when I have such a power to advance thine? Thus also *Saul* thought all must cleave to him, and forsake the cause of *David*, because he was great and could preferre them (1 *Sam:* 22. 7.) *Will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields, and vineyards, and make you all Captains of thousands, and Captains of hundreds?* Hath he any great places to bestow, and honours to give? Why then doe ye seeme to adhere to him and his party. Hope of reward makes a great bias upon some mens spirits, and carrieth them quite off from truth.

There is a second consideration prevailing much with many in this matter; for though they are unmoved by rewards, and will not bite at the bayte of selfe-advancement; yet, say they, O he is a great man, and hath great power, he may do me a shrewd turne, he may vex me and undoe me, he may sit upon my skirts hereafter and ruine me. Thus where hope doth not, feare may carry a man from respect to right to the respect of persons. But know, That be a man never so great, and able to doe me a mischiefe, yet truth must be maintained and Justice be done, though we should be quite undone by appearing for it. It hath been sayd of old, *Let justice be done, though heaven fall*; much more should it be done, though we for doing and abetting it fall to the earth. *Moses* gave that charge more then once (*Levit.* 19. 15. *Deut.* 1. 16, 17.) *Thou shalt not respect the person of the poore, nor honour the mighty, but in righteousnesse shalt thou judge thy neighbour.* Againe, *Ye shall not respect persons in Judgement, but ye shall heare the small as well as the great, you shall not be afraid of the face of man, for the judgement is Gods*; neither undue pity to the poore, nor carnal feare of the great (which two often doe) ought to put any check or stop to the execution of Justice. So in that excellent model of instructions which *Jehoshaphat* gave his Judges (2 *Chron:* 19 7.) *Wherefore now let the feare of the Lord be upon you, take heed, and doe it; for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.* As if he had said, Do not you respect persons, for God respects no persons; he is no gift-taker, therefore be ye no gift-takers; your duty is to give every one his due. That which is right to one man is right to another, either in the same, or in any paralel case; That which is the rich mans right in his cause, is the right of the poore man in his cause; yea it is as sinfull not to have a due respect to the rich man in his case, as not to have respect to the poore man in his. Then all sorts and degrees of men are judged righteously, when there is no regard had or notice taken in Judgement, of what sort or degree any man is. *Judges are called gods, and therefore should act like God without respect to men.*

Quod uni æquum est, non debet alteri in eodem casu esse iniquum.

And as this is a truth in all those cases of judgement, where Magistrates sit in the place of God, so it is as true in all the private judgements and determinations of brethren concerning persons or things, which (by way of distinction from the former) is commonly called the putting or referring of a matter in differ-

rence *to men*. We must take heed in private judgements, that we be not swayed according to the condition of persons, nor must we make the fault great or lesse, the cause better or worse, because the person is greater or lesse, friend or stranger to us. The Apostle gives this counsel and caution to the Churches (*James* 2. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.) *My Brethren, have not the faith* (that is, the doctrine of faith or profession) *of our Lord Jesus, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons; For if there come into your assembly a man with a gold ring, and there come in also a poore man in vile rayment, and you have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, sit thou here in a good place, and say to the poore, stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: are ye not then partiall in your selves, and are become judges of evill thoughts.* In administring the things of God which are spirituall, we must observe no civill difference, no distinction among men. Christ hath given himselfe alike and equally to rich and poore, bond and free, and therefore, as to Church-priviledges and enjoyments, they must all be alike, and equall unto us. No man is to be knowne after the flesh in the things of the Spirit (2 *Cor:* 5. 16.) that is, no man is to be valued meerely, upon natural or worldly accounts; if we doe, then (as the Apostle *James* concludes in the place last before mentioned) *are we not partiall in our selves?* that is (as some also translate that reproving question) *Have we not made a difference*, a groundlesse difference, or a difference grounded upon carnal respects, rather then upon any solid reason; and so as it follows in the close of the verse, *are become judges of evill thoughts*, that is, have made our judgement of those persons, according to the dictate of our owne evill and corrupt thoughts, not according to the rule of the word.

Further, this sin of respecting persons, is found also in the ordinary converse of men; For when we cast favours upon those that are ill deserving, and commend those (as we say) to the skies, who should rather fall under our severest censure, and are led to doe all this also, because the person is a kinsman or a friend; for though (*ceteris paribus*, other qualifications and circumstances being equall) we are to respect friends and kindred, who are our owne flesh, before strangers, yet vertue and worth should out-weigh relations, and (as *Levi* in doing Justice, *Deut:* 33. 9.) so we in bestowing rewards, *should not acknowledge our Brethren, nor know our owne children*; but let such have our rewards who best deserve them.

I may adde this also, To take up this or that forme of religion, because such and such persons are in it, and to reject another, though better, because none but a few that are despised and contemned are in it, is a most dangerous way of respecting persons. This was the meaning of that question (*John* 7. 48.) *Have any of the rulers, or of the Pharisees, believed on him?* As if certainly that must alwayes be the best way and rule of believing, which is professed by the rulers? Or as if it were ground enough to reject a way of religion because the common people or the poore are mostly found in it. Thus, 'tis storied of a Great Prince that was converted to the Christian faith, and resolved to be baptized, that seeing a great many poore men in his way as he went, he asked to whom they belonged; it was answered they were Christians, and of that religion which he was entring into; what, doth Christ keep his servants so poore? (sayd he) I will not serve such a Master, and so drew backe, even while he was but setting his face towards Christ. I might instance the sinfullnesse of accepting persons in many other particular cases, as well as these, but these may suffice for a tast. *Let me not* (saith *Elihu*) *accept any mans person,*

Neither let me give flattering titles unto man.

In the former part of the verse it was *Ish*, here it is *Adam*; I will not respect the person of the greatest men, nor will I flatter any earthly, any mortall man. Mr *Broughton* renders, *That I respect an earthly man.* The vulgar latine translates the whole verse thus; *I will not accept any mans persons, and I will not equall God to man*; As if he had sayd, *I will not measure God by man, in his dealings and proceedings with man*; *As my purpose is to speake truth, and spare no man, so I will not wrong God by drawing him downe to the rules of men. What is man that he should compare with God?* But, though this be a truth, yet because it departs so farre from the Original text, I will not stay upon it. Our reading is cleare.

Gr æciverteum כנה cognominandi per ειπρεπεια Sa ve-vereri, et θαυμασω πρόσωπα mirari personas in reddiderunt. Merc: Et deum homini non æquabo. Vulg:

I will not give flattering titles.

There are severall other readings of these words, which I shall propose

Apud hominem præfatione non utar. Jun: *Et apud hominem ne permutem nomina.* Coc: *Et ad hominem non mutato nomine loquar.* Merc: *Ego non ingratiam ejus tectis verbis utar occulte eum designans & nomen proprium immutans. Verbum* נכה *significat aliquem occultè designare.* Merc: לא אכנה נכה *est mutare rerum nominibus agere, ut non possis nisi obscurè quid sentiatur intelligi. Cujus contrarium est aperire os, et נכה ενη ενωκ ενη appellare.* Coc:

propose and passe to our owne. First, *I will not use a preface*, or, *I will not stand prefacing with man*. Flatteries are usually set forth in affected Prefaces and Apologies. Secondly, *Let me not change names before men*; or, *let me not speak to man under a borrowed name*; That is, let me speake plainly and clearly without ambages and fetches; let me speake to every man, and about every thing by its owne name, and not with covered words, as if I were unwilling to touch those to whom I speake. Our translation is yet more cleare to the scope and tendency of this place; *I will not give flattering titles.*

This sentence is but two words in the Hebrew; The verbe signifies (say the Rabbins) to *hide*, or *conceale*, or to carry a matter closely and obscurely; and they give the reason of it, because in flattering there is a hiding of what men are, and a shewing of what they are not. The word signifieth also to give a *nicke name* or a *by-name*, and so the sence is; I will not give secret reflections, nor gird at any man upon the by; *Jobs* friends had done so sometimes, though they after spake explicitely and directly enough. Further, the word signifies the giving of *any additionall title*. Thus I finde it used in the Prophet (*Isa:* 44. 5.) *One shall say, I am the Lords:* (speaking how persons shall flow into the Church) *and another shall call himselfe by the name of Jacob: and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himselfe by the name of Israel: He shall surname himselfe*; that's the word here used, he shall take up that title, that illustrious title, he shall list or enroll himselfe among the people of God, and thinke it his honour and glory *to surname himselfe by the name of Israel*. The word is so used againe (*Isa:* 45. 4.) *For Jacob my servants sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not knowne me.* It is spoken of *Cyrus*, I have given thee a glorious title; God did not only name *Cyrus*, but gave him a surname, he called him, *Cyrus my servant, and Cyrus mine anoynted*. Thus the word signifies to give a title, or a surname; now there are surnames or titles of two sorts; First, disgracefull and reviling ones, justly given to, but commonly by vile men. Secondly, Honorable and advancing ones. And these are of two sorts.

First, Such as are true and well deserved, many by the great acts which they have done, have purchased surnames; *Alexander* King

King of *Greece*, for his Warlike valour and successes, was called *The Great*; And among The Romans *Scipio* after his victories over the *Carthaginians* in *Africa*, was surnamed *Africanus*. The Romane Historie supply sundry examples of this kind. And when in Scripture *Paul* is called an *Apostle*, *Peter* an *Apostle*, They well deserved these honorable Titles, because as they were meerely of Grace immediately called and sent of God, to publish and plant the Gospel all the world over, so they laboured abundantly in it, and by their ministery subdued and conquered the world to the faith and obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Secondly, There are also titles and surnames, which are meere pieces of flattery, there being no worth in the person that may justly deserve them. 'Tis not sinfull to give titles, but as we translate *to give flattering titles unto men*. We should call men as they are, and as they deserve; *I will call a spade a spade*, (saith *Elihu*) he that is good I will call him good, and he that is bad I will call him bad; and that which is ill done I will say it is ill done; *Let me not give flattering titles unto men.*

Hence observe.

Flattery is iniquity: to give flattering titles unto men is to transgresse the Law of God.

Some will not give true and due Titles to any man; The most truly honorable persons and highest Magistrates, shall have nothing from them but *Thou* and *Thee*. *Jacob* a holy and a plaine man, yet called his owne brother, *My Lord Esau*, (Gen. 32. 4. Gen: 33. 8.) *Luke* The Evangelist called *Theophilus*, *Most excellent* (Luke 1. 3.) And *Paul* stiled *Festus*, *Most Noble* (Acts 26. 25.) Now as they erre upon one extreame, who will not give true titles, so doe they on the other, who give (which *Elihu* here disclaimes) flattering titles. There is a two-fold flattery.

First, In promises.

Secondly, In praises.

Some are full of flattery in promises, they will tell you of great matters which they will doe for you, yet meane no such thing. Thus (*Psal.* 78. 36.) The children of *Israel* dealt with God, when in the time of their straights and calamities they promised to doe great and good things, they would turne to the Lord and serve him; *Nevertheless* (saith the text) *they did flatter him with*

with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues; for their heart was not right with him, &c. Thus many upon their sick-beds, or in a day of trouble, what promises will they make? How deeply will they engage for duty, if God will restore them? how holy and zealous and upright will they be? they will leave their former ill courses, and yet all is but flattery, they really intend it not. 'Tis flattery in promises to God, when there is not a purpose in the heart to doe what we say, but only to get our ends upon him; And we deale no better many times by one another; men in streights will promise any thing, and when they have gained enlargement, performe nothing.

Secondly, There is a flattery in praises, and that's here professed against. This flattery in praising hath a double respect.

Multi sunt qui vitia virtutibus vicina honestare contendunt & vitium omne patiant adumbrata nomenclatura è vicino subjectæ virtutis. Basil: in Psal: 61.

First, To the actions of men. 'Tis flattery to call that act good that is nought, that just that is unrighteous; To put titles of vertue upon those things that are vicious, to call that which is indeed a covetous act, a thrifty one, and to call that act which is cruell, just, at most but strict or severe, this is to flatter men in what they doe.

Secondly, There is a flattery of persons, as to what they have and are, when we speake more of them then is in them, when we speake highly of them, who are low in all abilities and attainments. How grossely doe they give flattering titles, who blow up very Ideots with a conceit of their learning, who extoll fooles for wisdome, and commend the wicked as vertuous, yea recommend them as patternes of vertue.

We should give honour to all men to whom it belongs; but we are not to flatter any man, for that belongs to no man. (*Rom:* 13. 7.) *Render therefore to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custome to whom custome, feare to whom feare, honour to whom honour.* There is an honour that belongs to men with respect to their degrees, when none belongs to them with respect to their qualities. He that is very honorable as to his place, may not deserve any honour as to his worth, yet he must be honoured as much as his place comes to. And as there is an honour due to those that are above us, so there is an honour due to those that are our equalls, yea to those that are our inferiours, and below us. The Apostle gives that direction more then once; we have it first (*Rom:* 12. 10.) *Be kindly affectionate one to another, in honour*

preferring one another. The people of God should be so farre from an ambitious affectation of preheminence above others, that they should freely and really (not as many doe complementally) give others the preheminence, and offer them the upper place or hand; The grace of humility, doth not only forbid us to exalt our selves above our betters, but it also (in many cases) bids us set our selves below those whose betters we are. One of the Ancients hath made three degrees of this kind of humility. The first is, when we make our selves inferior to our equals; The second, when we make our selves but equal to our inferiors; The third, when we make our selves inferior even to our inferiors, and lesse then those who are lesser then we. Of this third sort of humility, the Apostle speakes againe in that serious admonition to the Church (*Phil:* 2. 3.) *Let nothing be done through strife, or vaine glory, but in lowlinesse of minde; Let each esteeme other better then himselfe.* As it is good to judge (according to truth) the worst of our selves, and the best of others, so it is good to have a better opinion of others then of our selves.

So then, the poynt lyeth not against giving honour to any man, or to men of all sorts, but only against the giving of undue honour to any. Of that the Apostle speakes (*Gal:* 1. 10.) *If I yet please men, I should not be the servant of Christ*; that is, if I should please men by flattery, smoothing them up in their sins or errors, I could not be the servant of Christ. They that were the strick observers of Christ, could not but observe this in him, that though he came to save man, yet he was farre enough from pleasing, that is, humoring any man. (*Luke* 20. 21.) *And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person of any, but teachest the way of God truly.*

Yet caution is to be used here. For some goe so farre to the other hand, that while they thinke they ought not to flatter or please, they care not how they slight or disrespect the persons of men; and in stead of forbearing (as they ought) to give undue titles, they will not (as was toucht before) give so much as those that are due; that's a sin in defect, as the other is in excesse. And they sin much more who while they refuse to give flattering titles, are free to give reviling titles. There are these two great tongue-evills among men; Some give flattering titles,

others give reviling titles, detracting, calumniating, and biting titles; it is as dangerous not to forbeare the one, as to be free and forward in giving the other, and therefore we ſhould take heed of both theſe extreames, that our ſpeech may have an equall reſpect to truth, both while we praiſe, and while we reprove.

Verſ. 22. *For I know not how to give flattering titles.*

Neſcio cognominare; i. e. *Blandiri*. Bez:

It ſeemes to have little vertue in it, or matter of commendation, not to give flattering titles, when we are not able, or know not how to give them; To heare one that is (as we ſpeak) a meere *Countryman*, or a *clowne* ſay, I will not give flattering titles, ſpeakes not his praiſe at all, becauſe 'tis ſuppoſed he at moſt can but ſpeake ſence, or true Engliſh; but to heare a learned man, or ſome Great Courtier ſay, I will not give flattering titles, this is ſomething, this ſhewes that his honeſty maſters his ability, and that his conſcience is too ſtrong for his parts. How is it then that *Elihu* ſaith, *I know not to give flattering titles*? Had not *Elihu* wit and skill, words and language at command to give them? Was he ſo courſely bred that he could not reach them?

I anſwer, Thoſe words, *I know not*, may have a three-fold interpretation.

Firſt, *I know not*, is, I have not made that piece of knowledge my ſtudy, I have not ſet my ſelfe to learne the art of flattery, nor to gaine the skill of carnal Courtſhip. Thus *I know not* to doe it, is, I have not ſet my ſelfe to doe it, I have not made it my buſineſſe, or my ayme to doe it; *A good man hath*, or at leaſt *deſireth no skill in that which is evill, or not his duty*; how much ſoever any man knows to flatter, yet we may ſay he knows not to flatter who abhorreth flattery; And can ſay (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Epheſ:* 4. 20.) *He hath not ſo learned Chriſt*; that is, he hath heard no ſuch leſſons, nor received any ſuch inſtruction in the ſchoole of Chriſt.

Thus *Elihu* ſaith, *I know not to give flattering titles*. And doubtleſſe, 'tis beſt being an Ideot, or a bungler at the doing of that which is not good, or (as the Apoſtle ſaith, ſome are to every good work) to be reprobate to every evill work, and word. How knowing are they, who can ſay in truth, they know not how to lie, or flatter, &c. I dare not ſay (with the Papiſts) that ignorance

norance is, but I am ſure this neſcience is not only the mother of devotion, but a great poynt of devotion it ſelfe. And, in this ſence every godly man, and only a godly man knoweth not how to doe evill.

For as the wicked may have the Theory of good workes, and know what it is to pray, what it is to heare the word of God, yet they have no skill, they are not ſtudied, nor fitted for the practiſe of thoſe workes; So a godly man may know in ſpeculation what it is to doe wickedly, and how to doe it as well as the moſt wicked man in the world, yet he is not at all diſpoſed nor ready for the practiſe of any wickedneſs. As nature makes us reprobate to good, ſo grace to evill workes. The Prophet ſaith of a bad ſort of men, (*Jer:* 4. 22.) *They are wiſe to doe evill, but to doe good they have no knowledge*. Were they an ignorant people? No, the meaning is, they had not ſet themſelves to learne the doing of that good which they knew; theirs were not ſins of ignorance, but of wilfulneſſe, and perverſneſſe. So on the other hand, 'tis the commendation of the people of God, *They are wiſe to doe good, but to doe evill they have no knowledge. I know not to give flattering titles.*

Secondly, As to know a thing or perſon, imports the allowance and approbation of it. (*Pſal:* 1. 6.) *The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous*; that is, he approveth it. (*Pſal:* 101. 4.) *I will not know a wicked perſon*; that is, I like him not, I regard him not, I will never give him teſtimony, he ſhall neither have my hand, nor my heart. So, not to know a thing or perſon, notes our diſallowance and diſtaſt of either; in this ſence Chriſt will ſay to thoſe great knowing profeſſors (*Luke* 13. 27.) *I tell you, I know you not whence you are, depart from me*, &c. Thus, here when *Elihu* profeſſeth, *I know not to give flattering titles*; his meaning is, I like not, yea, I cannot abide to doe it. I may be as much skilled as any man to ſpeake high words, poſſibly I could Court it as well as others, but I have no heart to doe it, yet it is the abhorrence of my ſoule to doe it. *A good man doth not approve the doing of evill, and therefore though he know well enough how to doe evill, yet he is truely ſayd not to know how to doe it.*

Thirdly, *Not to know a thing*, is not to be accuſtomed, or practiſed in it. Thus when *Elihu* ſaith, *I know not to give flattering titles*; he ſeemes to ſay, *It is not my manner, I have not been*

uſed to flatter. As uſe doth not only make fitneſſe, but encreaſeth our knowledge, ſo diſuſe doth at once unfit us to doe a thing, and diminiſheth our knowledge how to doe it. And therefore what we uſe not to doe, we are rightly ſayd not to know to doe. *I know not to give flattering titles.*

Hence note.

The ſpirit of a good man is ſet againſt all that is evill, he cannot cloſe nor comply with it.

His underſtanding aſſenteth not to it, his will chuſeth it not, his conſcience cannot ſwallow it, though not a camel, but a gnat, the leaſt of ſin-evils, much leſſe doth he give himſelfe up to the free and cuſtomary practiſe of great ſins. A good man may well be ſayd, not to know to ſin, becauſe though he knoweth the nature of all ſins, yet he knowingly declines the doing of every ſin. *I know not to give flattering titles,*

In ſo doing my Maker would ſoone take me away.

Thoſe words, *in ſo doing*, are not expreſſed in the Originall, but ſupplyed to make up the ſence; and yet we may very well read the text without them; *I know not to give flattering titles, my Maker would ſoone take me away*, or as Mr *Broughton* renders, *my Maker would be my taker away.*

My Maker.

Elihu expreſſeth God, by the work of creation, or by his relation to God as a creator; *Elihu* doth but include himſelfe in the number of thoſe whom God hath made, he doth not exclude others from being made by God, as much as himſelfe, while he ſaith, *My Maker*. God is the maker of every man, and is ſo in a three-fold conſideration.

Firſt, He is the maker of every man, in his naturall conſtitution, as he is a man, conſiſting of a reaſonable ſoule and body. *I am fearefully and wonderfully made*, ſayd *David*, with reſpect to both, (*Pſal.* 119. 14.)

Secondly, God is every mans maker, in his civill ſtate, as well as in his naturall; he formeth us up into ſuch and ſuch a condition, as rich, or as poore, as high, or as low, as Governours or as governed, according to the pleaſure of his owne will. (*Prov.* 22. 2.) *The*

The rich and the poore meete together, the Lord is the maker of them both; he meaneth it not only, if at all in that place, that the Lord hath made them both as men, but he hath made the one a rich man, and the other a poore man. Thus the Lord is the maker of them both. And as the Lord makes men rich, ſo Great and honorable. (*Pſal.* 75. 6.) *Promotion cometh not from the Eaſt, nor from the Weſt, nor from the South*; It cometh from none of theſe parts or points of earth or heaven, it cometh from nothing under heaven, but from the God of heaven; *God is the Judge, he putteth downe one, and ſetteth up another.*

Thirdly, The Lord is the maker of every man in his ſpirituall ſtate, as good, and holy, and gracious. (*Epheſ.* 2. 10.) *We are his workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works*; till we are wrought by God, we can doe none of Gods worke, nor have we any mind to doe it. Now when *Elihu* ſaith, *My Maker would ſoone take me away*, we may underſtand it in all theſe three ſences; he that made me this body and ſoule, when I came into the world, he that ordered my way and ſtate all this while that I have been in this world, he that formed me up into a new life, the life of Grace, and hath made me a *new man* in this and for another world. This *my Maker would ſoone take me away.*

Hence note.

It is good to remember God as our maker.

Man would not make ſuch ill worke in the world, if he remembred God his maker, or that himſelfe is the work of God. We ſhould remember God our maker; Firſt, as to our being, as from him we receive life and breath. Secondly, as to our well-being, as from him we receive all good things, both for this life and a better. (*Eccleſ.* 12. 1.) *Remember now thy creator* (not only that God is a creator, but thy creator, remember this) *in the dayes of thy youth*; And ſurely if thou remembreſt him well, thou wilt not forget thy ſelfe ſo much as to forget the duty which thou oweſt him. Thinke often upon thy maker, and then this thought will be upon thee alwayes, *If I owe my ſelfe wholly unto God for making me in nature, how much more doe I owe my ſelfe unto God, for making me a new creature.* We ought to live wholly to him from whom we have received our lives. He that hath made us ſhould have the uſe of us. He hath made all things for himſelfe,

selfe, (*Prov:* 16. 4.) chiefely man, who is the chiefe of all visibles which he hath made. Those two memento's, That we are made by the power of God, and that the price by which we are redeemed is the blood of God, should constraine us at all times and in all things to be at the call and command of God. *My Maker*

Would soone take me away.

Invoce ישאני *tolleret me, alludit ad praecedens* אשא. q. d. *Si capiam faciem me capiet.* Coc:

We had the same word in the former verse, there 'tis used for accepting a person; here for taking away a person. The Learned Hebricians take notice of an elegant flower of Rhetorick in this expression; *If I take persons, God will take away my person*; so we may translate the Text; *If I take men, my God will take me away*. Yea my maker would not only take me away at last, or (as we say) *first or last*, but he would make dispatch, and be quicke with me, *My maker would*

Soone take me away.

Some render, *He would take me away as a little thing*; But the mind of our translation is, he would take me away in *a little time*.

כמעט The originall word beares either signification, and so may the scope of the text; My Maker would take me away as a little thing, he would blow me away as a feather, or as dust, and crush me as a moth; and he would doe it in a moment, in a little time; all the men of the world, yea the whole world is but a little thing before God, and he can quickly take both away. (*Isa:* 40. 15.) *Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the Ballance; Behold, he taketh up the Islands as a very little thing.* Now if Whole Islands, if all nations are such little things as drops and dusts, then, what is any one particular man, how big soever he be? And how soone can God take him away! Little things are taken away in a little time. So the word is used in the second Psalme (*v.* 12.) *If his wrath be kindled but a little*, or but, *as a little thing*; if the wrath of Christ be kindled only so farre that you see but a sparke of it, *blessed are they that trust in him*; There is no standing before the least wrath of the great God, by the greatest of the sons of men.

We translate, *He would soone take me away*, or he would doe it *in a little time*, my ruine needs not be long in working, he would

would rid his hands of me presently; to take or snatch a man away, notes three things.

First, A violent death, or a violence in death.

Secondly, A speedy or sudden death, a quick dispatch. When the fire was kindled and the word sent out against *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, their maker soone took them away; he bid the earth open, and it tooke them away in the twinckling of an eye; they went downe quick into hell. It is sayd of a wicked man in this booke (*Chap:* 27. 21.) *The East wind carrieth him away*; there also this word is used, that is, judgement like some fierce impetuous winde, shall blow him from his standing, and blast all his glory.

Sunt qui ישאני *tolleret me, exponant, combureret me, ut aliquando sumitur hoc verbum a flamma, quae in sublimi tollitur.* Merc:

Some give the sence by the effect of fire, *My Maker would soone burne or consume me*. The word in the Hebrew signifieth *to burne*, as well as to take away, and we know the burning of a thing is the taking of it quite away; fire makes cleane riddance. And againe Fire or flame riseth up (as a thing that is taken up) into the aire, and that which is burned in the fire may be sayd to be taken up with it. Thus also 'tis translated (2 *Sam:* 5. 20, 21.) *David came unto Baal-perazim, and David smote them there*, &c. *and there they left their Images, and David and his men burnt them*; we put in the margin, *and David and his men tooke them away*; which is the translation here in *Job*. Either of the readings is cleare and full to the purpose; God hath fire, he hath hell-fire unquenchable for sinners, their maker can quickly consume and burne them up. (*Isa:* 27. 4.) *Who would set the briars and thorns in battell against me, I would passe through them and burne them up together.* How quickly can the Lord burne wicked men, who like briars and thorns scratch and teare the innocent? wicked men can no more stand before the wrath of God, then briars and thorns can stand before a flaming fire. That's a good reading; ours comes to the same sence, *my Maker would soone take me away*.

Hence observe.

First, *As flattery and accepting of persons are great, so they are very dangerous sins, they are wrath-provoking sins.*

If we flatter men, God will not flatter us, he will deale plainly with us. To receive flattery, or to suffer our selves to be flattered,

tered, is very dangerous, as we see in the example of *Herod* (*Acts* 12. 22, 23.) who having made a very eloquent Oration, *The people gave a shout, saying, it is the voice of a God, and not of a man*; They gave him flattering titles, or (as some render the former part of this verse) they wonder'd at his person. But what was the issue of it? Presently (saith the text) *the Angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory, and he was eaten up with wormes, and gave up the ghost*. Thus his Maker tooke him soone away, for taking that glory to himselfe. O take heed of entertaining flatteries when given, we should put them back from us, as we would a poysonous cup. High commendations of Sermons given to the Preacher, may have a sad consequence. *When men give much glory to men, 'tis hard for men to give the glory back againe to God.* *Herod* was so pleased and tickled with the glory which the people gave him, that he could not part with it, and so lost himselfe. Because he forgat that he was a worme, he was destroyed by wormes. The translation given us by the Septuagint of this text in *Job*, complyes fully with that dreadfull example in the *Acts*; *I know not how to give flattering titles, for in so doing the wormes or moths will eate me up*. The words of *Elihu* thus rendred in *Job* are a threatning assertion, That the wormes shall eate those that give flatteries; and the judgement which fell upon *Herod*, is an example threatning all those that receive flattering titles, with that dreadfull doome *of being eaten up by wormes*. And doubtlesse, if not that, yet either some other corporal and visible judgement, or (which is much worse) some spirituall and invisible judgement, will overtake those who love either to flatter others, or to be flattered themselves. And as that example shewes how dangerous it is to receive flatteries; so to give flatteries, hath in it a double danger.

καὶ ἐμὲ σῆτες ἔδονται, *et me tineæ edent.* Sept:

First, It is dangerous to others. When Parasites flatter Princes, when Ministers flatter the people, how doth it ensnare their soules? 'Tis hell and death to flatter sinners, and not to deale plainly with them; to give lenitives instead of corosives; to give oyle where vineger should be given; to heale the hurt of the soule deceitfully, is the greatest hurt and wounding to the soule. Flatteries are those pillows spoken of in the Prophet (*Ezek:* 13.18.) sowed to the Arme-holes or elbowes of wicked men, upon which many sleepe without feare, till they dye without hope; yea these flatte-

flatteries as well as any falsities and errors of doctrine, whether respecting faith or worship, are that *untempered morter*, of and against which the Prophet speakes in the same Chapter (*v.* 10. 15.) wherewith some daubed that wall of vaine confidence which others built, while they *seduced the people, saying, peace, and there was no peace*. How often doe the true Prophets warne the people against these flatteries of the false Prophets. And how sadly doth the Prophet *Jeremy* bewaile them (*Lam:* 2. 14.) *Thy Prophets have seene vaine and foolish things for thee, and they have not discovered thine iniquity, to turne away thy captivity; but have seene for thee false burdens, and causes of banishment*; that is, the visions which they have seene, they pretend, at least, to have had from God, but they are their owne dreames and brain-sick phansies, and so the *cause of thy banishment*; they have undone thee with these deceits, soothing thee up in those thy sins, which procured thy banishment, and caused the Lord to thrust thee out, and send thee farre away from thine owne Land. They have fed, yea, filled thee with false hopes, till thy condition was hopelesse. How many thousands have been destroyed by flatteries both for here and for ever. And if flattery be so dangerous to the receiver, then

Secondly, It must needs be much more dangerous to the giver. It is no small sin to palliate or cover the sins of others; But it is a farre greater sin to commend the sins of others, or to commend others in their sin. And we may take the measure of this sin by the punishment of it. When we heare the Lord threatning flatterers with suddaine destruction, doth it not proclaime to all the world, that their sin is full of provocation? The Lord beares long with many sorts of sinners, but not with sinners of this sort. *My maker would soone take me away.*

Non leve scelus est veritatem palliare. Merc:

Whence note, Secondly.

God can make quicke dispatch with sinners.

As the grace of God towards sinners, so his wrath needs no long time in preparations. When we designe great actions, we must take time to fit our selves. Princes must have time to set out an Army or a Navy, when they would either defend themselves against, or revenge themselves upon their enemies; But God can presently proceed to action, yea to execution. He that made

Nescit tarda molimina spiritus sancti gratia.

made all with a word ſpeaking, can deſtroy the wicked as ſoone as ſpeake the word; he can doe it in the twinkling of an eye, with the turning of a hand. *My Maker would ſoone take me away.*

Thirdly, Becauſe *Elihu*, being about to ſpeake in that great cauſe, ſets God before him, and God in his judgements, in caſe he ſhould ſpeake or doe amiſſe.

Note, Thirdly.
They that doe or ſpeake evill, have reaſon to expect evill at the hand of God.

If I ſhould flatter (ſaith *Elihu*) *my Maker would ſoone take me away.* I have reaſon to feare he will; not that God takes away every ſinner as ſoone as he ſins, (God rarely uſeth Martiall Law, or executes men upon the place, we ſhould live and walke more by ſence then by faith if he ſhould doe ſo) but any ſinner may expect it. God (I ſay) is very patient and long-ſuffering, he doth not often take ſinners away, either in the act, or immediately after the act of ſin. Yet there is no ſinner but hath cauſe to feare, leſt as ſoone as he hath done any evill, God ſhould make him feele evill, and inſtantly take him away. *David* prayeth (*Pſal:* 28. 3.) *Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity.* There is a two-fold *drawing away* with the workers of iniquity. Firſt, to doe as they doe; that is, wickedly. Thus many are drawne away with the workers of iniquity; and 'tis a good and moſt neceſſary part of prayer, to beg that God would not thus draw us away with the workers of iniquity, that is, that he would not ſuffer the workers of iniquity to draw us away into their lewd and ſinfull courſes. Secondly, there is a *drawing away* to puniſhment, and execution. In that ſence (I conceive) *David* prayed, *Lord draw me not away with the workers of iniquity*, who are taken away by ſome ſudden ſtroake of judgement; though I may have provoked thee, yet let not forth thy wrath upon me, as thou ſometimes doeſt upon the workers of iniquity: doe not draw me out as cattell out of the paſture where they have been fed and fatted, for the ſlaughter. Every worker of iniquity is in danger of preſent death, and may looke that God will be a ſwift witneſs againſt him: though moſt are reprieved, yet no man is ſure of that.

Againe,

Againe, In that *Elihu* repreſents God to himſelfe ready to take him away, in caſe of flattery and prevarication in that cauſe.

Note, Fourthly.
It is good for us to over-awe our ſoules with the remembrance of the judgements and terrours of God.

'Tis profitable ſometimes to converſe with the threatnings, as well as with the promiſes; 'tis profitable to remember what God is able to do againſt us, as well as to remember what God is able to do for us; Even believers ſhould goe into the dreadfull treaſuries of wrath, into the thunders & lightnings of divine diſpleaſure, as well as into the delightfull treaſuries of mercy, of love & compaſſion; it is good for a good man to thinke God may take me away, as well as to thinke God will ſave and deliver me; we need even theſe meditations of God, to keepe downe our corruptions, and to fright our luſts. Though it be the more Goſpel way to make uſe of love, yet the Goſpel it ſelfe teacheth us to make uſe of wrath, (2 *Cor:* 5. 11.) *Knowing the terrour of the Lord we perſwade men.*

Laſtly, Note.
When we goe about any great worke, when we are either to ſpeak or doe in any weighty matter, it is good for us to ſet God before our eyes, to thinke of and remember our Maker.

As in great undertakings we ſhould remember our Maker, waiting for and depending upon his aſſiſtance, ſtrength, and bleſſing, in what we doe or goe about; ſo we ſhould remember him to keepe our hearts right. And to remember ſeriouſly, believingly and ſpiritually, that God beholds and ſeeth us in all our wayes and workes, and that according to the frame of our hearts, and the way that we take in every action, ſuch will the reward and the iſſue be, cannot but have a mighty command, and an anſwerable effect upon us. We can hardly doe amiſſe with God in our eye. And therefore as it is ſayd of a wicked man (*Pſal:* 10. 4.) that *through the pride of his countenance he will not ſeeke after God, God is not in all his thoughts.* So *David* ſaid of himſelfe (though in that Pſalme he ſpeakes chiefely as a type of Chriſt) and ſo in proportion or as to ſincerity every godly man ſaith like *David*,

Pſal: 16. 8.) I have ſet the Lord alwayes before me: becauſe he is at my right hand, therefore I ſhall not be moved; that is, as I ſhall not be utterly overthrowne by any evill of trouble, ſo I ſhall not be overcome by any evill of temptation: or I ſhall not be moved either in a way of diſcouragement by the troubles I meete with, or in a way of enticement by the temptations I meete with. How ſtedfaſt, how unmoveable are they in the worke of the Lord, how doe they keepe off from every evill worke, who ſet the Lord alwayes before them, and have him at their right hand! Could we but ſet the Lord before us, either in his mercies or in his terrors, we ſhould not be moved from doing our duty in whatſoever we are called to doe.

Thus farre *Elihu* hath drawne out his ſpeech, in a way of preface, preparing himſelfe for his great undertaking with *Job*; He hath now fully ſhewed the grounds why he undertooke to deale with him, and what method he would uſe in that undertaking. In the next Chapter, and ſo forward to the end of the 37th, we have what he ſayd, and how he mannaged the whole matter.

JOB,

JOB, Chap 33. Verſ. 1, 2, 3.

Wherefore, Job, I pray thee, heare my ſpeeches, and hearken to all my words.
Behold now I have opened my mouth, my tongue hath ſpoken in my mouth.
My words ſhall be of the uprightneſſe of my heart: and my lips ſhall utter knowledge clearely.

Elihu having ſpent the whole former Chapter in prefacing to *Jobs* friends, directs his ſpeech now to *Job* himſelfe; yet not without a renewed Preface, as will appeare in opening this Chapter. Wherein we may take notice of foure heads of his diſcourſe.

Firſt, We have his Preface in the ſeven former verſes of the Chapter.

Secondly, A propoſition of the matter to be debated, or of the things that *Elihu* had obſerved in *Job's* ſpeech about this Controverſie, from the 7th verſe to the 12th.

Thirdly, We have his confutation of what *Job* had affirmed, from the 12th verſe to the 31th.

Laſtly, We have his concluſion, exciting *Job* to make anſwer to what he had ſpoken, elſe to heare him ſpeaking, further in the three laſt verſes of the Chapter.

Elihu in his Preface, moves *Job* about two things; Firſt, to attend what he was about to ſay.

Secondly, To make reply to and anſwer what he ſhould ſay.

Elihu moves *Job* to the former duty ſeverall wayes.

Firſt, By a mild Entreaty and ſweet Inſinuation in the firſt verſe; *Wherefore, Job, I pray thee, heare my ſpeeches, and hearken to my words.* As if he had ſayd, *I doe not come authoritatively and rigorouſly*

gorouſly upon thee, to command or demand thy attention, but as a faithfull friend I deſire thee to attend unto my ſpeech, and hearken to my voice.

Secondly, He moves him to heare, by profeſſing his own readineſſe and preparedneſſe to ſpeak, in the 2d verſe; *Behold now I have opened my mouth, my tongue hath ſpoken in my mouth*; that is, I have been (as it were) tuning my inſtrument, and fitting my ſelfe for diſcourſe, let me not looſe my labour nor my ſtudy.

Thirdly, He moves him to attend from the ſincerity and gracious Ingenuity of his heart in that which he had to ſay to him. This he ſayeth before him in the 3d verſe; *My words ſhall be of the uprightneſſe of my heart, and my lips ſhall utter knowledge clearely.* What better Encouragement to heare! And

Fourthly, *Elihu* moves him to heare from the Conſideration of his preſent ſtate, as a man, not only made by God, but by him inſtructed for the work which he had undertaken, the former of which is Expreſt, the latter Implyed in the 4th verſe; *The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.* Thus *Elihu* Calls out *Job* to heare. And

Secondly, As he invites him to heare what he had to ſay, ſo he provokes him to anſwer what he ſhould ſay, verſ. 5. *If thou canſt anſwer me, ſet thy words in order before me, ſtand up.* As if he had ſaid, Be not diſcouraged, take heart man, doe thy beſt to defend thy ſelfe, and make good thy owne cauſe againſt what I ſhall ſay; Spare me not; Doe thy beſt, thy utmoſt.

Having thus encouraged him in General to anſwer, he proceeds to give him two ſpeciall Motives.

Firſt, From their Common ſtate or Condition, in the 6th verſe; *Behold, I am according to thy wiſh in Gods ſtead; I alſo am formed out of the clay.* As if he had ſayd; *You have often deſired to plead with God, or that God would heare your plea; now conſider, I am in Gods ſtead, though a man like your ſelfe.*

Secondly, He encourageth him from the tenderneſſe of his ſpirit toward him, reſpecting his preſent Condition, promiſing to deal with, or treate him fairely, gently, in the 7th verſe; *Behold, my terror ſhall not make thee afraid, neither ſhall my hand be heavy upon thee.* That favour *Job* had asked of God, in the 9th Chapter; *Let not thy terror make me afraid.* Now ſaith *Elihu*, that which thou didſt fear from God, thou needeſt not at all feare in

in dealing with me, *My terror ſhall not make thee afraid*, &c. Thus *Elihu* begins with *Job*, that he might lead him to receive fairely, or anſwer fully what he had to ſay.

The three firſt verſes of the Chapter, Containe the firſt part of the Preface, wherein *Elihu* excites and calls forth *Jobs* attention by thoſe foure Conſiderations already diſtinctly propoſed, the firſt whereof is layd downe,

Verſ. 1. *Wherefore, Job, I pray thee, heare my ſpeeches, and hearken to all my words.*

Elihu begins very mildly, ſweetly, inſinuatingly, even entreatingly, and beſeechingly, *Wherefore*

I pray thee.

The word which we tranſlate, *I pray thee*, is in the Hebrew language a monoſyllable adverb of obſecration or exhortation. *I pray thee.* אנא *adhortantis vel excitantis tum etiam obſecrantis.*

Hence note.

'Tis good to uſe gentleneſſe towards thoſe with whom we have to deale, eſpecially with thoſe who are either outwardly afflicted, or troubled in ſpirit.

Entreaties have great power; and therefore though the Prophets and Apoſtles ſpeake ſometimes in a threatning way, and command attention upon utmoſt peril, yet for the moſt part they beſpeake it with Entreaties, (2 *Cor:* 5. 20.) *Now then we as Embaſſadors for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us, we pray you in Chriſts ſtead be ye reconciled to God.* The Apoſtles went about a begging, as it were, with this meſſage, with the beſt meſſage that ever was carried forth to the world, *Reconciliation unto God*; *we pray you.* And againe (2 *Cor:* 6. 1.) *We then as workers together with him, beſeech you alſo that you receive not the grace of God in vaine*; that is, the doctrine of the Goſpel holding forth the grace and favour of God freely in Jeſus Chriſt, (1 *Theſ:* 4. 1.) *Furthermore, we beſeech you brethren, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walke and to pleaſe God, ſo ye would abound more and more.* As he did beſeech them not to receive the grace of God in vaine, ſo he did beſeech them to a progreſs in & an Improvement of that grace. Again (1 *Theſ:* 2. 7.)

We

We were gentle among you, even as a Nurſe cheriſheth her Children; how tender is a nurſe to the infant hanging at her breaſt, or dandled on her knee. *Speak ye Comfortably to Jeruſalem*, was the Lords direction when ſhe was in her warfare; that is, in a troubled and afflicted condition. (*Iſa.* 40. 2.) The Hebrew is, *Speak to her heart*; ſpeak ſuch words as may revive her heart, and adde freſh ſpirits and life to her. The Apoſtles rule for the reſtoring of thoſe that are fallen, is, that they ſhould be kindly treated (*Gal.* 6. 1.) *Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye that are ſpirituall reſtore ſuch an one with the ſpirit of meekneſſe.* It is a great poynt of holy skill ſo to order a reproofe as not to provoke; ſo to ſpeak as to ſpeak open, or pick the lock of the heart; Affectionate Entreaties are bleſſed pick-locks, which doe not ſtraine the wards, but effectually lift up the holders and ſhoote the bolt of the heart, cauſing it to ſtand wide open to receive and take in the truth of promiſes, counſels and reproofes. *Meeke words meeken the ſpirit.* 'Tis hard to refuſe what we perceive ſpoken in love; and if any thing will ſoften a hard heart, ſoft language is moſt likely to doe it. When *Abigail* came out and met *David* upon his way, hot upon revenge, yea having (upon the matter) ſworn revenge againſt *Nabal* and his houſe, yet her Entreaties and mild words overcame that mighty warriour, at leaſt, took off the edge of his ſpirit, and of all his party, (1 *Sam:* 25. 33.) Nor did he only accept of or ſubmit to her counſel, but gave thanks both to God and her for it; *Bleſſed be the Lord, and bleſſed be thy advice, which haſt kept me this day from ſhedding blood.* Gentle words, like gentle raine, ſoake deep, and make the ſoule, like a fruitfull tree, bud and bloſſome. For as paſſion in the ſpeaker, begets paſſion in the hearer, and heate brings forth heate, ſo kinde and kindly words, are not only moſt uſefull, but moſt powerfull. There is a rebuking, and that Cuttingly, or a ſpeaking of cutting words, uſefull in ſome caſes, then eſpecially, when ſinners have not only done evill, but are ſetled and reſolved in it. But in caſe of affliction, ſpecially of inward affliction, or trouble of ſpirit, ſoft words are beſt and doe beſt. *Heare, I pray thee*, ſaith *Elihu.*

And hearken to all my words.

Here's hearing, and hearkening, to hearken is more then to heare;

heare; to heare is barely to receive the ſound of words; but to hearken is to take up the ſenſe of them, or as it were to ſuck out the ſtrength and ſweetneſſe of them; to hearken is to weigh or ponder every tittle ſpoken, and take the value of it. The word in the text, which ſignifies *to hearken*, hath a ſingular elegancy in it. One of the Rabbins renders, *Eare my words*; heare my words and Eare them. The ſame word which in the verbe ſignifies to hearken, which is the worke of the eare, ſignifies alſo the eare, or inſtrument of that worke in the noune. To *eare words*, notes the moſt diligent attention, as to *eye a thing*, notes the moſt accurate inſpection. The word ſignifies alſo the beam of a ballance, becauſe by the eare, or by the two ears (as by a ballance) words are tryed and poyſed, whether they are weighty and ſolid, or light and chaffy; when *Elihu* ſaith, hearken to, or weigh my words, he intimates that he meant to ſpeak words which had worth in them, or that he meant to ſpeak matter more then words. And therefore he would not have a word loſt, *Hearken*, ſaith he,

To all my words.

To all, not to this or that only, but to all; As if he had ſayd, *I intend not, and I hope I ſhall not ſpeak one needleſſe or unuſefull words*; not a word beſide the buſineſſe. Therefore *hearken to all my words.*

Hence note; Firſt.

They who ſpeak to inſtruction, admonition or exhortation, ſhould not uſe one word more then is uſefull, not a word more then is to the purpoſe.

Seeing, *every idle word that men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give account for it in the day of Judgement*, (Math: 12. 36.) How ſhould every man take heed of ſpeaking an idle word, a word of which he can give no good account for any good it is likely to doe. Idle words will make ſad worke one day, and words of no value or account, will turne to a heavy account in the great day. *That's an idle word, which doth neither worke the heart for good, nor ſtrengthen the hand to or in a good worke.* And if we ſhould be carefull not to ſpeake one idle word, or not one word unworthy to be heard, how ſhould we avoyd evill words, or words which corrupt the hearers.

Secondly, As the words referre to that duty which *Elihu* minds *Job* of, and moved him to, *Hearkning to all his words.*

Note.

They who heare, eſpecially about holy things and ſoule-matters, ſhould heare all.

One word ſhould not be loſt, when every word is precious. We gather up the filings and leaſt duſts of Gold. The eare ſhould gather all that truth which the mouth ſcatters, and the heart ſhould lay it up as treaſure. We may charge many ſorts of men with deficiency at eare-worke. And ſurely if men will not heare all that they ought to believe and doe, they can neither doe nor believe any thing that they heare.

Firſt, Some will not heare the word at all, they are like the deafe Adder ſtopping their eares at the voyce of the charmer, charme he never ſo wiſely to them.

Secondly, Others thinke that there's not a word more to be heard, but what they have heard already, who can ſpeak what they know not?

Thirdly, There are few who hearken to any word that is ſpoken; that is, who make it their buſineſſe to heare, who heare with diligence, and labour at it. As it is a great labour to ſpeak, ſo I aſſure you, it is no ſmall nor eaſie labour to heare, if you heare indeed and as you ſhould. To heare the word is the exerciſe of the whole ſoule. Among many hearers, there are but few hearkeners, ſuch I meane as weigh and conſider what they heare.

Fourthly, There are very few who heare and hearken to all the words of righteouſneſſe and ſalvation. As ſome though they heare all, yet hearken to halves, ſo others will heare but halfe, or only ſo much as pleaſeth them of what is ſpoken. When the King of *Judah* (Jer: 36. 23.) had the Role brought to him which *Baruch* had written from the mouth of *Jeremiah*, he heard three or foure leaves of it read to him as he ſate by the fire, and then he cauſed it to be cut with a penknife and caſt into the fire; He did not read it out, he had enough of it, he had (as we ſay) *his belly full*, but his heart was altogether empty, he was very angry and vext at the word, but not at all humbled nor affected with it; and therefore would not heare all thoſe words.

Againe,

Againe, To hearken is to obey, to ſubmit and yield up our ſelves to the truth we heare. *Samuel* tells *Saul* (1 Sam: 15. 22.) *To obey is better then ſacrifice, and to hearken then the fat of Rams*; to obey and to hearken is the ſame thing; the obedient eare is the hearkening eare. *Mine eare haſt thou opened* (ſaith Chriſt, *Pſal:* 40. 6.) This opening or digging of his eare (as we put in the Margin) ſignified his readineſſe to obey, as 'tis expreſſed (*v.* 7, 8.) *Then ſayd I loe I come; I delight to doe thy will O my God.* And in reference to this he had ſayd before (*v:* 6.) *Sacrifice and offering thou didſt not deſire, burnt-offering and ſin-offering haſt thou not required*; that is, for themſelves, or comparatively to that, which in the volume of thy booke is written of me, that I ſhould doe. Which clearely expounds and is almoſt the ſame in termes with that of *Samuel*; *To obey is better then ſacrifice, and to hearken, then the fat of Rams.* Thus *Elihu* preſſeth *Job* to hearken to *all his words* obedientially, or to hearken with a purpoſe to obey. Take a few Conſiderations, why we ſhould both heare and hearken to, that is, obey, the whole mind of God, all thoſe words which have the ſtamp of divine authority upon them.

Firſt, All the words of God are alike holy and true, pure and precious. Though ſome truths are more neceſſary to be knowne and believed then others, yet all are neceſſary; nor can we be diſcharged from the duty of hearing and obeying any one of them, if called.

Secondly, There is a like or the ſame power and authority in all the words of God; ſo that to neglect or ſlight any one word, is to put a ſlight upon the authority of God himſelfe. There is but one Law-giver and word-ſender.

Thirdly, Not to ſubmit to any one word (though it be ſuppoſed we hearken to all others) drawes upon us the guilt of non-ſubmiſſion or diſobedience to the whole word of God. That's the Apoſtles concluſion (*James* 2. 12. *ver.*) *Whoſoever ſhall keepe the whole Law, and yet offend in one poynt, he is guilty of all*; for though in many things we offend all, yet there is a Goſpel-ſence wherein we are ſaid to keep the whole Law of God. And ſo the Apoſtles meaning is, that whoſoever ſhall give himſelfe a looſe or a liberty, whoſoever ſhall diſpence or indulge himſelfe in breaking any one Command of God, he breakes all,

that is, he declares himſelfe ready to break all, if he had a like occaſion or temptation.

Fourthly, We would have all our words hearkened to by God, we would have God grant all our Petitions, all our requeſts, and ſupplications, and ſhall not we hearken to and obey all the precepts of God? Shall we not receive and believe all his promiſes and threatnings?

Fifthly, As we deſire God would, ſo God hath promiſed to heare all our words, even all the requeſts of his people which are according to his will. Chriſt ſpeakes without reſtriction (*Math:* 21. 22.) *All things whatſoever ye aske in my name, believing ye ſhall receive.* And againe (*John* 14. 13, 14.) *Whatſoever ye ſhall aske in my name, that will I doe*, &c. Nor are there any reſtrictions upon the promiſes of God in granting and doing what we aske, but only theſe two; Firſt, that we aske *right things*; Secondly, that we aske *aright*. Now if the Lord hath promiſed to hearken to all our words, not to this or that, but to all our words which are according to his will, (we have no liberty to aske beyond the will of God, beyond the rule of Scripture, nor can we aske any thing beyond that, but it is to our hurt and damage, now if God (I ſay) will hearken to all our words) ſhould not we hearken to all his?

Laſtly, The condition upon which God hath promiſed to heare all our words, is, that we ſhould be ready to heare and hearken to all his words, (1 *John* 3. 22.) *Whatſoever we aske we receive, becauſe we keepe his Commandements, and doe the things that pleaſe him.* It were not confidence, but higheſt and moſt hatefull impudence, to expect that God ſhould pleaſe us by giving us what we aske, while we refuſe (which is the condition of that promiſe) to doe the things that pleaſe him. Thus *Elihu* would have *Job* hearken to all his words, he being about to ſpeake, not his owne, but the words of God. And that *Job* might not delay the opening of his eare to heare, *Elihu* tells him further in the next verſe, that himſelfe had already opened his mouth to ſpeake.

Verſ. 2. *Behold now I have opened my mouth, my tongue hath ſpoken in my mouth.*

This phraſe *of opening the mouth*, imports foure things.

Firſt,

Firſt, That a man hath been long ſilent; they that are full of talke, and ſpeake out of ſeaſon, may be ſaid to have their mouth alwayes open, rather then at any time to open their mouthes. But *Elihu* profeſſed in the former Chapter that he had waited as a Diſciple to heare and to learne, and had waited with utmoſt patience; therefore he might well ſay, *Behold now I have opened my mouth*, and taken upon me to ſpeake. So (*Chap:* 3. 1.) after *Job* had ſate ſilent a great while, it is ſaid, *Then Job opened his mouth, and curſed the day of his birth*; Thus to open the mouth, intimates much ſilence or forbearance of ſpeech, and long expectation of a ſeaſon or opportunity to ſpeake.

Secondly, Opening the mouth, implyeth as ſpeaking after much ſilence, ſo with much prudence. A fooles mouth is therefore ſayd to be alwayes open, becauſe whenſoever he ſpeaketh, he is found ſpeaking imprudently and impertinently. But a wiſe man will not ſpeake, unleſſe he may ſpeake to purpoſe, and ſo opens his mouth to ſpeake. *Solomon* ſaith, (*Prov.* 24. 7.) *Wiſdome is too high for a foole, he openeth not his mouth in the gate*; that is, he is unfit to ſpeak in the preſence of wiſe and judicious men, he may open his mouth in the ſtreets, and in common Compony, but he opens not his mouth in the gate, where the Elders and Magiſtrates uſed to meete and judge the weightieſt matters. There is a foure-fold Conſideration to be had, as to the due opening of the mouth, (And 'tis no ſmall matter to open the mouth with thoſe Conſiderations.)

Os aperire dicuntur apud Hebræos, qui inſtituunt ſermonem ſerium et de re gravi. Piſc:

Firſt, Conſideration is to be had of the place and Company where, and to whom we ſpeake. We muſt not caſt pearles before ſwine, nor give ſtrong meate to children.

Secondly, The time and ſeaſon wherein we ſpeake muſt be conſidered; every truth is not fit for every time. Chriſt would not ſpeak all at once to his Diſciples, for this reaſon, (*John* 16. 12.) *I have many things to ſay unto you, but ye cannot beare them now*; and becauſe ye cannot beare them now, therefore I will not ſay them now.

Thirdly, Conſideration is to be had how and in what way to ſpeake, whether inſtructingly, or exhortingly, reprovingly, or Comfortably, we ſhould alwayes labour to divide the word of God, and what we ſpeake from it aright, giving every one his proper part and portion. Then a man opens his mouth to ſpeake, when

when he Conſiders how to ſort his ſpeech according to the ſtate of things and perſons before him.

Fourthly, Conſideration is to be had of the end or tendency of ſpeech, what our ayme and mark is; we ſay, *a fooles bolt is ſoone ſhot*, he Conſiders not his ayme and mark in ſpeaking; he that opens his mouth, looks to his mark, and drives a deſigne, or hath a purpoſe in every word that paſſeth from him.

Inde videtur dici אוֹר *pytho, quod obſeſſi vel uti ventres inflati turgeſcant & ſpiritus immundus ex illorum ventre reſpondeat.*

Thirdly, This phraſe of opening the mouth, notes liberty of ſpeech, or boldneſſe in ſpeaking; when a man doth not ſpeake in his throat, as untaught children doe, nor in his belly, or in a bottle, as Witches and Sorcerers are ſayd to doe, that peepe and mutter (*Iſa:* 8. 19.) When a man (I ſay) doth not ſpeak any of theſe covert wayes, but freely and liberally, then indeed he opens his mouth to ſpeake. We have that Expreſſion in the promiſe, (*Ezek.* 29. 21.) *In that day will I cauſe the horn of the houſe of Iſrael to bud forth, and I will give thee the opening of the mouth in the midſt of them, and they ſhall know that I am the Lord*; That is, I will give thee boldneſſe, and liberty of ſpeech: time was when thou didſt not dare to ſpeake a word for God, or of God, of his praiſe, name and worſhip, or if thou didſt it was but in a Corner, or whiſperd in ſecret; but the time ſhall come when I will give thee the opening of the mouth; thou ſhalt ſpeak my truth and praiſes boldly: and the Enemy ſhall know that I the Lord have procured thee this liberty. 'Tis a great mercy when God gives his people the opening of the mouth, or liberty of ſpeech, to ſpeak boldly, no man hindring, no nor ſo much as diſcouraging them. The Prophet makes that the character of *an evill time, when the prudent keep ſilence*, (Amos 5. 13.) As in evill or calamitous times, it becomes the Godly prudent to be willingly ſilent, adoring the juſtice of Gods ſevereſt diſpenſations towards them with patience and without murmuring at his hand. So in ſome evill times they are forced to keepe ſilence, (though as *David* ſpake, *Pſal:* 39. 2.) their ſorrows be ſtirred) either leſt by ſpeaking, even nothing but truth and reaſon, they draw further ſorrows upon themſelves; or becauſe they ſee it but loſt labour to ſpeake to a people obſtinate and reſolved on their way.

Fourthly, This phraſe of opening the mouth to ſpeake, notes the things ſpoken to be of very great worth, ſuch as have been long concocted and digeſted, and at laſt ready to be brought forth

forth, as out of the treaſury of an honeſt and underſtanding heart. The heart is the treaſury of words, there they are ſtored up: and from thence iſſued forth; as Chriſt ſaith, *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh.* As there is a ſtock of evill words in the hearts of evill men, ſo of good and gracious words in the hearts of Godly men, and when they open their mouthes (according to this notion) it is to bring forth the treaſures, and riches of their hearts, to bring forth the gold and ſilver and precious things ſtored up there; all theſe are very uſefull interpretations of this phraſe; and I might give diſtinct obſervations from them, but it may ſuffice to have named them. I ſhall only adde that the laſt is conceived by ſome to be chiefely intended in the latter branch of this verſe.

Os aperire eſt bene diſcuſſa et præmeditata habere dicenda. Bold:

My tongue hath ſpoken in my mouth.

This ſeems a ſtrange Expreſſion; where ſhould the tongue ſpeak but in the mouth? when the tongue is out of the mouth, can it ſpeak? as the mouth cannot ſpeak without the tongue, ſo the tongue cannot ſpeak out of the mouth: why then doth he ſay;

My tongue hath ſpoken in my mouth?

The Hebrewis, *In my palate*, the palate being a part of the mouth, and one ſpeciall Inſtrument of ſpeech (Naturaliſts reckon five, *The lips, the tongue, the teeth, the palate, & the throat*) 'tis put for all; but there is more in it then ſo, for every man ſpeaks in his mouth, or by the palate which is the *heaven, roofe or cieling of the mouth.* Therefore when *Elihu* ſaith, *My tongue hath ſpoken in my mouth*, or in my palate; The palate may be conſidered as the inſtrument of taſting as well as of ſpeaking. We ſay ſuch a thing is very ſavory to the palate; And we call that *Palate wine*, which is quicke and lively, briske and pleaſant to the taſt. Thus when *Elihu* ſaith here, *My tongue hath ſpoken in my mouth or palate*; His meaning is; I have uttered only that which I have wel conſidered, what my tongue hath ſpoken to you, I have taſted my ſelfe; I have put every word to my palate; For as a man that that taſteth wine or any other ſapid thing, muſt have it upon his palate, before he can make a Judgement, whether it be ſweet or ſharpe, quick or flat: ſo ſaith *Elihu*, my mouth hath ſpoken in my palate, I taſted my words before I ſpake them.

Palatum oris cælum eſt. Druſ: *Præmeditata et quaſi intellegentiæ meæ palato præguſtata ſum prolaturus.* Bez: *Bene ſapui verba mea antequam illa effevendo tibi aliiſq; ſapienda et guſtanda trederem.* Bold: *Non ſequar verba aliorum, ſed proprios conceptus enunciabo.* Aquin:

Hence

Hence note.

Judicious and wiſe men will taſt and try what they intend to ſpeake before they utter it.

The ſpeaker preſents his words to the taſt of the hearer; For as this Scripture hath it at the 3d verſe of the next Chapter, *The eare tryeth words, as the mouth taſteth meat*; now he that ventures his words to the taſt and cenſure of others, had need take a taſt of them before he doth it. *My tongue hath ſpoken in my mouth.*

Secondly, From the ſcope of *Elihu* in adding this, namely, to gaine attention,

Note.

There is great reaſon we ſhould heare that carefully, which the ſpeaker hath prepared with care.

They who regard not what they ſpeake, deſerve no regard when they ſpeake; but a weighing ſpeaker, ſhould have a weighing hearer. And what any mans tongue (in the ſence of *Elihu*) hath *ſpoken in his mouth*, that we ſhould heare, not only with our eare, but with our heart. This a ſtrong argument to quicken attention, yet *Elihu* gives in another, and a ſtronger in the next verſe.

Verſ. 3. *My words ſhall be of the uprightneſſe of my heart, my lips ſhall utter knowledge clearly.*

In the former verſe *Elihu* called for an open eare, becauſe he opened his mouth, and was about to ſpeak, or had ſpoken what he had well taſted. In this verſe he preſſeth the ſame duty, by proteſting all manner of Ingenuity and Integrity in what he was about to ſpeake. He would ſpeake not only ſeriouſly, but honeſtly, not only from his underſtanding, but his conſcience.

My words ſhall be of the uprightneſſe of my heart, &c.

The meaning is not, that the uprightneſſe of his heart ſhould be the ſubject upon which he would treat, though that be a bleſſed and moſt uſefull ſubject, yet it was not the poynt he intended to diſcuſſe: but when he ſaith, *My words ſhall be of the uprightneſſe of my heart*, his meaning is, my words ſhall flow from the

the uprightneſſe of my heart, I will ſpeake in the uprightneſſe of my heart, or according to the uprightneſſe of my heart, my words ſhall be upright as my heart is; the plain truth is this, *I will ſpeak truth plainly, I'le ſpeak as I thinke, you may ſee the Image of my heart upon every word, I will ſpeak without dawbing, without either ſimulation or diſſimulation.* Some conceive this to be a ſecret reproofe of, or reflection upon *Jobs* friends, as if *Elihu* had ſuſpected them to have ſpoken worſe of *Job*, then they could thinke him to be in their hearts. But as we cannot judge mens hearts directly, ſo there is no reaſon why we ſhould judge ſo of their hearts conjecturally. It is enough to the purpoſe, that *Elihu* aſſerts his owne uprightneſſe without reflecting upon or ſuſpecting the uprightneſſe of thoſe, who had dealt with *Job* before; *My words ſhall be in the uprightneſſe of my heart.*

Sincerè et abſque ullo fuco proferam omnia mei ſenſus. Beza.

This uprightneſſe of his heart may have a three-fold Oppoſition. Firſt, to paſſion; Some ſpeake in the heat and fire of their hearts, rather then in the uprightneſſe of them; it is good to ſpeak with the heat and fire of zeal in our hearts; but take heed of the heat and fire of paſſion, I will not ſpeak in the heat, but in the uprightneſſe of my heart, ſaith *Elihu*.

Secondly, This uprightneſſe may be oppoſ'd to partiality, I will not ſpare when there is cauſe to ſpeake home, nor preſſe, nor load thee with any thing where there is not cauſe for it.

Thirdly, This uprightneſſe in ſpeaking, may alſo be oppoſ'd to ſpeaking without cleare ground or proofe. And 'tis ſuppoſed that *Elihu* aymed more ſpecially at this, *Jobs* friends having been ſo high in his reproofe, charging him with divers things for which they had no proofe, but only a vehement ſuſpition. The words of *Eliphaz* are full (*Chap: 22. 5.*) *Is not thy wickedneſſe great, and thine iniquities infinite? for thou haſt taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, and ſtripped the naked of their Clothing: Thou haſt ſent widdowes empty away, and the armes of the fatherleſſe have been broken:* Surely *Eliphaz* could not ſpeak this in the uprightneſſe of his heart, knowing it to be ſo, though he ſpake it in this uprightneſſe of his heart, that he really thought it to be ſo. Which kind of uprightneſſe *Paul* had in perſecuting the Saints, (*Acts 26. 9.*) *I verily thought with my ſelfe, that I ought to doe many things contrary to the Name of Jeſus of Nazareth.* Thus *Jobs* friends verily thought he had done many Groſſe things con-

Non loquar ad calumniendum vel ad videndum, ſed ſimplici animo ad veritatem manifeſtandam. Aquin:

trary to the Law of God, but they only thought so, they could not prove it; This is a lame kinde of uprightnesse, and in opposition to this *Elihu* might now say, I will not charge or burden thee with any thing but what I know to be true, and had even from thy own mouth. *My words shall be of the uprightnesse of my heart.*

I shall not stay to give particular notes from these words, according to this three-fold opposition; The reader may improve them in that, as he hath occasion; Only in Generall Observe.

The heart and tongue should goe together.

The tongue should alwayes be the hearts Interpreter, and the heart should alwayes be the tongues suggester; what is spoken with the tongue should be first stampt upon the heart, and wrought off from it. Thus it should be in all our Communications and exhortations, especially when we speak or exhort about the things of God, and dispence the mysteries of heaven. *David* spake from his heart while he spake from his faith (*Psal:* 116. 10.) *I believed, therefore have I spoken.* Believing is an act of the heart, with the heart man believeth; so that to say, *I believed, therefore have I spoken*; Is as if he had said, *I would never have spoken these things, if my heart had not been cleare and upright in them.* The Apostle takes up that very protestation from *David* (2 Cor: 4. 13.) *According as it is written, I believed, therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak*; that is, we moved others to believe nothing but what we believed, yea, were fully assured of, our selves, as the next words of the Apostle import, *Knowing, that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.* To speak what we in our hearts believe, is to speak in the uprightnesse of our hearts.

Some speak without their hearts, that is, coldly, they have no heart at all in speaking; as some heare without their hearts, only with their eares; so some speak without the heart, only with the tongue.

Secondly, Others speake what was never in their hearts; They have no experience in themselves of what they say to others. They throw out their words at a venture. It is sad to speak

speak that as a truth, or a Comfort to others, which we have not found in our selves, that is, have not felt the operation of it upon our owne hearts. How are they to be lamented, who speak of the things of God as a Stage-player, who acts the part of, or Personates a Prince, being himselfe but a poore plebeian. It is bad to speak without our hearts, or coldly, but 'tis worse to speak what was never in our hearts, or hypocritically.

Thirdly, Not a few speak quite against their hearts; these are at fartheſt distance from speaking in the uprightnesse of their heart; they speak with a false and malicious heart, they speak with a deceitful and double heart, with a heart and a heart. There are three wayes wherein men speak against their owne hearts and Consciences.

First, In the profession which they make of themselves, (*Rev:* 2. 9.) Christ writing to the Church of *Smyrna*, saith, *I know thy faith and patience*, &c. and the *Blasphemy of them who say they are Jewes and are not, but lye*, &c. And so at the 9th verse of the 3d Chapter, *Which say they are Jewes and are not, but doe lye.* We are not to understand it strictly, that they professed themselves to be of the Nation of the *Jewes*, the Children of *Abraham*. A *Jew* there is, any one that holdeth out a profession of the faith of Christ. Old Testament words are often applyed to the New Testament, or Gospel state; they say they are *Jewes*, that is, true believers, but they are not, and doe lye; to lye, is to goe against a mans mind, against his Conscience; they make a great profession of godlinesse and holinesse, of Christ and his wayes, and they lye at every word; for indeed they are *the Synagogue of Satan.* Thus at this day some make profession before the Church of God, and by such profession get admittance into the Church of God, who yet belong to the Synagogue of Satan. The Apostle *John* speakes of such, (1 *Ep: Joh:* 2. 19.) *They went out from us, but they were not of us*; that is, they were not truly of us, though they once desired to come in and joyne themselves to us, and for a time walked with us.

Secondly, The tongue speaks against the heart many times in the promises which men make to others of what they will doe. O what Courtesies and friendships will some men professe! they will tell you aloud how they love you, and how much they are your servants, while there is nothing in their hearts, but deceit

and guile, yea possibly nothing but wrath and revenge to death. Thus *Ishmael* went out *weeping all along as he went* (*Jer:* 41.6.) and sayd, *Come to Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam*, yet he invited them into the City as poore birds into a snare, to destroy them presently; He was seemingly troubled at their affliction and wept, but his were Crocodiles tears, he murthered them as soone as he had them in his power.

Thirdly, Some speake against their hearts doctrinally or in the Doctrines which they propound and teach. There are three sorts who speak amisse doctrinally.

First, Some speak that which is not right in the uprightnesse of their hearts; or, I may say, they speak that which is false with a true heart; that is, they think it to be a truth which they utter, when 'tis an error, and will be found so at last. When ever we see different opinions stifly maintained among honest and godly men, (which though it be a very sad sight, yet it is too often seene, in that case I say) one side alwayes speaks that which is false with a true heart, and utters error uprightly. The truth is, some men defend an error with better and more honest hearts, then some others defend the truth. For

Secondly, There are such as speak right without any uprightnesse of heart, or they speak truth with a false heart; this *Elihu* specially professeth against; he would not only speak that which was right, but with uprightnesse. The Apostle found several teachers of this second sort (*Phil:* 1.16, 17, 18.) Some preach Christ, that is, the Gospel, yea the truth of Christ in the Gospel, (else the Apostle would not have rejoyced in it, as he professeth he did at the 18th verse, *I therein doe rejoyce, yea and will rejoyce*) Yet these men did not preach in the uprightnesse of their own hearts; for, saith he, *Some Preach Christ out of envy and strife, and some out of good will*, (they preached Christ, pure Gospel, yet not with pure hearts, for, he adds, they did it) *supposing to adde affliction to my bonds*; They preacht to oppose the Apostles more then to set up Christ, and though they preached the truth, yet they did it more *in pretence then in truth*; as 'tis sayd at the 18th verse. The same Apostle speakes of others, (2 *Cor:* 11.13, 14.) who preached what was true for the matter, and yet he calls them *false Apostles, deceitfull workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ, and no marvell, for Satan*

Satan himselfe is transformed into an Angel of light. They formed and shaped themselves into Angels of light, and tooke up the doctrine of the faithfull Apostles of Jesus Christ in some things, yet they did it not in the uprightnesse of their hearts, but that they might weaken the estimation of the true Apostles in the hearts of the people, and set up themselves there, that so in other things they might with greater efficacy or more effectually, mis-lead them or draw them into error. Thus some are found speaking lyes in the truth of their hearts, and others speaking truth in the falsenesse of their hearts.

Thirdly, Many speak that which is false with a false heart; This is the height of wickednesse. The Apostle prophesieth of such (1 *Tim:* 4.2.) *Who shall speake lyes in hypocrisie*: the matter they speak is a lye, and they speak it with a base and false heart too. And therefore he saith of these in the same verse, *Their consciences are seared with a hot iron*; that is, they are insensible both of the mischiefe they doe, and of the misery they must suffer.

Elihu professeth himselfe to be none of all these; He spake that which was right and true in the uprightnesse and truth of his heart. Such a one the Apostle directs the Gospel Deacon to be, (1 *Tim:* 3.9.) *Holding the mystery of faith in a pure Conscience*, which is the same with an upright heart. And he tells us (1 *Thes:* 2.4, 5.) That himselfe did not use any guile in the ministration of the Gospel. He had truth on his side, and he had truth in his heart, as he also professed to his Brethren the *Jewes*, (*Rom:* 9.1, 2.) *I speak the truth in Christ, I lye not, my Conscience also bearing me witnesse in the holy Ghost*, &c. And againe, (2 *Cor:* 2.17.) *We are not of those that Corrupt the truth; we speak the truth, and speak it truly*. He is a better speaker that speaks with an upright heart, then he that speakes with an eloquent tongue; He is the happy speaker, who speakes more with his heart then with his tongue, that can say with *Elihu* to *Job*, *My words shall be of the uprightnesse of my heart*. Words spoken of that subject, and words flowing from that subject, are lovely words. Of this latter sort saith *Elihu* to *Job*, *My words shall be*,

And my lips shall utter knowledge clearly.

Job had charged his three friends (*Chap:* 13.4.) that they were

Quia tribus erroribus Jobum impositerat, quod essent fabricatores mendacii, hoc a se excludit dicens & sententiam labia mea purum loquentur. Aquin: ברור *purum planum perspicuum, a fuco alienum sincerum & ab omni scoria doli aut mendacij purgatorem.* Merc:

were *forgers of lyes*. This *Elihu* engageth against, while he saith, *My lips shall utter knowledge clearly*.

The word here translated *Clearly*, is rendered two wayes.

First, As an Adjective.

Secondly, As an Adverb.

Many render it as an Adjective, *My lips shall utter cleare knowledge*, or distinct knowledge; cleare as to the matter; pure, plaine, without any adulteration, deceit, or guile, as to the manner. So the word is often used, I might give you many Scriptures for it. The Prophet speaking in the person of Christ (*Isa:* 49. 2.) saith, *He hath made me a polished shaft*, the Hebrew is, *a pure shaft*, a glittering, shining shaft. (*Jer:* 5. 11.) *He made bright his arrowes*, there this word is used. It is applyed also to Chiefe men (1 *Chron:* 7.48.) *These were Choyce men*, pure men. So saith *Elihu* (*My lips shall utter cleare shining pure knowledge.*)

Hence note.

We should speak cleare truth. Truth without mixture, truth well winnowed, doctrine well refined.

The commandement of the Lord is a pure word, (*Psal:* 19. 8.) There's not any drosse at all in it, 'tis like silver tryed seven times in the fire (*Psal:* 12. 6.) The Prophet among other blessings which God promiseth to his Church and people, hath this (*Isa:* 30. 24.) *The Oxen likewise and the young Asses that eare the ground shall eate cleane Provender, free from the straw, and chaff, dust and darnel.* But may we not here renew the Apostles question, (1 *Cor:* 9. 9, 10.) *Doth God take care for oxen?* or saith he it altogether for our sakes? for our sakes no doubt it is written; That *the mouth of the oxe treading out the corne, should not be muzzl'd*, was written for the Ministers sake, to assure them, that while they labour in the Gospel to feed souls, their bodies should be fed. And that the *oxen and young asses shall eate cleane provender*, was written for the peoples sake, to assure them, that Christ would send them such Ministers as should feed them with pure holy wholesome doctrine, not with the chaffe of unwritten traditions, nor with the mixtures of humane inventions. They should be taught cleare knowledge, as *Elihu* here speaketh. This mercy was also prophecied (*Zeph:* 3. 9.) *Then will I turne to the people a pure language*, or a *Clean lip*: it is this word, that is, what

what they speak, shall be pure truth. Their language shall be, not only Grammatically pure, proper and genuine, but Theologically pure, without any tincture of error in it.

Secondly, As the word is taken (according to our translation) Adverbially.

Note.

We ought to speake truth clearly.

Some speake cleare truths, who yet doe not speak them clearly. They speak great truths, yet obscure them in their own way of expressions; they who wrap up sound doctrine in hard uncouth words, or deliver it in an unnecessary multitude of words, doe rather puzzle and confound their Auditors, then enforme or instruct them. And they who speak not knowledge clearly, are like those who mud the waters, or raise a dust in the ayre, which will not let others see distinctly what they hold or put in either. Speaking in darke words and strange notions, is like speaking in a strange language. They only speak profitably, who speak clearly. We commonly say, *Truth seekes no corners*, truth would not be hid. What are obscure and ambiguous words, words of a doubtfull construction and interpretation, but *corners*, wherein many hide truth, while they pretend to speak and publish it. Such speakers as wel as they who speak in an unknowne language, are Barbarians to their hearers. And therefore as the Apostle in reference to an unknowne tongue, to should we say in reference to any covert or obscure way of speaking in our owne mother tongue, *We had rather speak five words that others may be edified, then ten thousand words in hard and strange expressions*. Though we speak in a knowne language, yet doubtfull words hinder edifying as much as an unknowne language doth; yea such are as a forreiner to their hearers, while they speak in their owne Country tongue: 'Tis a speciall gift of God, to speak knowledge clearly. The Apostle hath left that excellent advice with all who are called to speak the great things of eternall life, (1 *Pet.* 4.11.) *If any man speak* (that is, if he speak about the things of God, divine things) *let him speak as the Oracles of God*. What are they? The oracles of God are the knowne word of God. But how are those oracles to be knowne? Surely as God spake them, plainly and clearly; The oracles of God were spoken without ambiguity,

ty, therefore let no man speake them as the oracles of the devil were spoken, or as the devill spake his oracles, that is, ambiguously and doubtfully; The devill of old gave out all his answers and oracles doubtfully and darkly to his darke and blinded votaries; what he sayd might beare severall Constructions. And he spake so on purpose, that whatsoever the event or issue proved to be, he (though the father of lyes) might have the reputation of speaking truth. The Devils oracle gave *Crœsus* such an answer as he might Interpret either of a great successe, or of a great overthrow, when he asked counsel about his warres. And when *Saul* came to Enquire of the Witch of *Endor*, that is, of the Devill, (1 *Sam:* 28. 11.) he gave him a doubtfull resolve; *To morrow shalt thou and thy Sons be with me* (v. 19.) Which ambiguous answer might be understood as of the next day following, so indefinitely of any day neere approaching. Satan loves not to speake knowledge clearely. But the servants and messengers of Christ, must use great plainness of speech while they are treating of and giving out the mind of God to his people; and be carefull that as the doctrine is sound which they deliver, so there may be a clearness in their delivering of it. Their lips (as *Elihu* engaged his should) ought to *utter knowledge clarely*.

Crœsus Halym penetrans magnam perveriet opum vim.

JOB,

JOB. Chap. 33. Vers. 4, 5, 6, 7.

The Spirit of God hath formed me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.
If thou canst answer me, set thy words in order before me, stand up.
Behold, I am according to thy wish in Gods stead: I also am formed out of the clay.
Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavie upon thee.

IN these foure verses, *Elihu* still prosecutes a discreete præfatory insinuation both of himselfe and of his intended discourse into the heart of *Job*, that both might find wellcome, and good entertainment there. *Elihu* had assured him at the third verse, that he would speak in the uprightness of his heart, or that he would deale candidly, and clearly with him. That was a strong argument to gaine attention. And in this fourth verse, he argueth with and urgeth *Job*, to give him attention, because he was a man of Gods making, as *Job* also was. The same hand wrought them both, and therefore, why should there be a strangenesse between them? or an unwillingness to give or receive counsel and helpe from one another?

Vers. 4. *The spirit of God hath formed me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.*

I shall open these words two wayes.

First, As a direct proposition, or assertion.

Secondly, In their connection and dependance, as they are here used, for an argument of perswasion.

First, Consider the Text, as an assertion; *The spirit of God hath made me*, &c. The word doth not signifie barely to *make*, or to clap up a worke any how, but to make with art, to make *skilfully*, to compose and fashion a thing with exactest grace, comelinesse, and beauty. Thus are we made by the Spirit of God. Man is an excellent piece of worke, yea man is the *Master-piece*

עשתני *faciendi verbum artificiosum & elaboratam agendi rationem affert.* Pined:

of all the viſible workes of God. *The Spirit of God hath made me.*

There are two things here to be enquired; Firſt, what we are to underſtand by the Spirit of God, to whom *Elihu* attributes his making. Secondly, Why doth *Elihu* attribute his making to the Spirit of God? To the former queſtion, I anſwer; Firſt, negatively, that by the Spirit of God we are not to underſtand a power or vertue put forth by God, in which ſence we ſometimes read the Spirit of God in Scripture. But by the Spirit of God here, we are to underſtand God the Spirit. In which ſence we read (*Gen:* 1. 2.) *The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.* As alſo (*Math:* 3.16.) *He ſaw the Spirit of God deſcending like a dove, and lighting upon him*; that is, upon Jeſus Chriſt, baptized by *John* in *Jordan.*

The ſecond queſtion is, Why doth *Elihu* attribute his making to the Spirit of God? Regeneration or our new-making is properly the work of the Spirit, but is Creation, or our naturall conſtitution his work alſo? Saith not *Moſes?* (Gen:2.7.) *The Lord God formed man out of the duſt of the earth*; Jehovah Elohim formed man. And if we look into the firſt of *John* ver: 2,3. we read thus; *In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God*; *the ſame was in the beginning with God, all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made, that was made.* There our maker (for the making of all things is attributed to him) is the Son, the ſecond perſon in the holy Trinity, or the *Word*, who (as it followeth in that Chapter) *was made fleſh.* Why then doth *Elihu* here aſcribe his making to the Spirit? And how are theſe Scriptures reconciled?

I anſwer, By that received *Maxime* in Divinity, *The workes of the holy Trinity towards the creature are undevided.* So that, while this Scripture aſcribes the making of man to the Spirit or Third perſon in the Trinity, it doth not at all croſſe thoſe which aſcribe it to the firſt or ſecond, the Father or the Son. *The Spirit of God hath made me.*

Hence note.

Firſt, *Man as to his bodily making, or the making of his body, is the workmanſhip of God.*

As we are his workmanſhip created in Chriſt Jeſus to good (or holy)

holy) *workes*, (Eph: 2. 10.) ſo we are his workmanſhip created to common and naturall workes. We have heard of that divine conſultation or reſolution rather (*Gen:* 1. 26.) *Let us make man:* The Father made man, and the Son made man, and the holy Spirit made man; The Father by the *Son*, through the holy Spirit made man. What a glorious, what a mighty power is put forth for the production of ſuch a poore creature as man is! And this is true, not only of the firſt man in his creation, but of every man ſince the creation, there is a concurrence of a divine power and workmanſhip in the ſetting up of man as man. (*Pſal:* 100. 3.) *It is he that made us, and not we our ſelves*; God doth not only make us holy men, but he makes us men. Hence *David* (Pſal: 13. 9-14.) *I am fearefully, and wonderfully made.* He ſpeaks there of the frame of his body, though that be much more true in reference to the admirable frame of the new creature which is ſet up in the ſoule; ſo, indeed we are fearefully and wonderfully made. (*Iſa:* 27. 11.) *This is a people of no underſtanding* (But did God ever make a people without naturall underſtanding? Surely no, but they were a people without ſpirituall underſtanding, they did not underſtand what the mind, and meaning of God was, and what their owne duty was; Such are a people of no underſtanding, how wiſe ſoever they are in their owne eyes, or in the eyes of the world, what followeth) *Therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will ſhew them no favour*; That is, God who made and formed them, both in their naturall capacity as men, as alſo in their civill and ſpirituall capacity as a Church and Nation, or as a Nationall Church (underſtanding it of the *Jewes*) will not have mercy on them, will not favour them. We read the ſame Church at once looking to God as their maker and moſt earneſtly moving and imploring his pity upon the ſame account. (*Iſa:* 64. 8, 9.) *But now O Lord, thou art our father, we are the clay, and thou our potter, and we all are the work of thy hand*; As if they had ſayd, Thou O Lord, haſt moulded us as thy creatures, and faſhioned us as thy Church, when we were but a rude maſſe or heape without forme or comelineſs, therefore doe not marre thy owne worke, doe not breake the veſſels of thine owne making, or as it followeth in the ſame Chapter, *Be not wroth very ſore O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever, behold, we beſeech thee, we are all thy people.*

Hence conſider.

Firſt, That, we owe not only our well-being, but our very being unto God. And therefore

Secondly, No man ought to looke upon himſelfe as his owne; So the Apoſtle argues (1 *Cor:* 6. 19.) *Know ye not that your body is the temple of the holy Ghoſt, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your owne*; No man is his owne, he is Gods, who hath made him. Saints and believers eſpecially are not their own in that reſpect; as alſo becauſe their bodies *are the temple of the holy Ghoſt*; that is, the holy Ghoſt hath ſanctified them for himſelfe, for his peculiar ſervice, and for his habitation. Now as the bodyes of Saints are the temple of the holy Ghoſt, becauſe he doth ſanctifie them; ſo they are the temple of the holy Ghoſt, becauſe he hath reared them up, and built them. That conſideration ſhould urge us to duty; our bodies are temples built, as well as temples ſanctified by the holy Ghoſt; And therefore we are not our owne at all, nor in any reſpect; and if we are not our owne at all, but the Lords, then we ought to be alwayes for the Lord.

Hence, Thirdly, Hath *the Spirit of God* made us? (as *Elihu* ſaith) then let the Spirit uſe us; how ſad is it, that when the Spirit of God hath made our bodies and ſoules, we ſhould let the wicked ſpirit uſe either (as he doth both the bodies and ſoules of carnall men) to his baſe ſervices. The evill ſpirit did neither make your bodies nor your ſoules, why ſhould he have the command of either? Therefore *as your members have been weapons of unrighteouſneſſe to ſin, ſo let them be inſtruments of righteouſneſſe unto God.* Seeing the holy Spirit hath made us, let not the evill ſpirit uſe ſo much as a little finger of us; for, he hath not made not only ſo much as a little finger of our hand, but ſo much as the leaſt haire of our heads (as Chriſt ſaith we our ſelves cannot, *Math:* 5. 36.) *white or blacke.* And therefore let not the evill ſpirit make uſe of one haire of our heads white or black, as a flagge of pride and vanity, or to be an occaſion of ſin to others. He that maketh the houſe ought to have the poſſeſſion and ſervice of it, either to dwell in it himſelfe, or to receive rent and profit from him that dwells in it. The ſpirit having made us, ſhould not only have the rent and revenue, but the full poſſeſſion of us for ever. That which is of God ſhould be for God, for him alwayes, and only for him. Se-

Secondly, In that the making of man is attributed to the Spirit.

Obſerve.

The Spirit of God is God.

The holy Ghoſt is not only a power of God, or a word gone out from God, but the holy Ghoſt is God. This is cleare from the efficiency of the holy Spirit; *The Spirit of God hath made me.* The work of creation is attributable to none but God. That power which at firſt ſet up man in his creation, continueth him to this day; this power and great prerogative is given to the Spirit; therefore the Spirit is God. (*Pſal:* 33. 6.) *By the word of the Lord* (his ſubſtantiall Word or Son) *were the heavens made, and all the hoſt of them, by the breath* (or Spirit) *of his mouth*; that is, *Jehovah* by his Eternall Son and Spirit made all things. The heavens and their hoſt, are there expreſſed by a *Synecdoche* of the part, for the whole creation, or, for all creatures both in heaven and in earth. Againe (*Pſal:* 104. 30.) *Thou ſendeſt forth thy Spirit, they are created*; The Spirit of God creates every day; what is it that continueth things in their created being, but providence? That's a true axiome in Divinity; *Providence is creation continued*; Now the Spirit of God who created at firſt, creates to this day; *Thou ſendeſt forth thy Spirit, they are created.* The work of creation was finiſhed in the firſt ſix dayes of the world, but the work of creation is renewed every day, and ſo continued to the end of the world. Succeſſive providentiall creation as well as originall creation is aſcribed to the Spirit.

The Scripture is full of arguments to prove that the holy Ghoſt is God; Which (becauſe this fundamentall truth is blaſphemouſly ſpoken againſt) I ſhall a little touch upon.

Firſt, As the Spirit createth and makes the naturall man conſiſting of body and ſoule, ſo he regenerateth (which is a greater creation) the whole into a ſpirituall man; therefore he is God. (*John* 3. 5.) *Except a man be borne againe of water, and of the Spirit* (that is, of the Spirit who is as water) *he cannot enter into the kingdome of God.* The holy Ghoſt is alſo call'd, *The ſanctifier*; ſanctification is regeneration in progreſs, and motion; regeneration is ſanctification begun, and ſanctification is regeneration per-

perfecting from day to day. (2 *Theſ:* 2. 13.) *We are bound to give thanks to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, becauſe God hath from the beginning choſen you to ſalvation, through ſanctification of the Spirit, and beliefe of the truth.* And the Apoſtle *Peter* writes to the *Elect* (1 Pet: 1. 2.) *according to the foreknowledge of God the father, through ſanctification of the Spirit.* Now, who can doe theſe great things but God ? who can regenerate, or give a new nature, who can ſanctifie or perfect that new nature but God alone ? Men and Angels muſt let theſe workes alone for ever, or (as we tranſlate, *Pſal:* 49. 8.) theſe acts ceaſe for ever from men and Angels, as much as the redemption of man from the grave, or from hell, from corruption, or condemnation.

Secondly, The Spirit is omniſcient, *He knoweth all things,* (1 *Cor:* 1. 12. 2 10. 19.) *The Spirit knoweth all things, yea the deep things of God.* He is not only acquainted with, and privie to the ſurface and outſide of things, but he ſearcheth things to the bottom of them. Nor doth he ſearch only the deepe or bottome things of common men, or of the chiefeſt of men, Kings and Princes, (whoſe hearts are uſually as much deeper then other mens, as their perſons and places are higher) but the Spirit ſearcheth the deep things, the bottome things of God, the things of God that lye loweſt, and moſt out of ſight, the Spirit underſtandeth; therefore the Spirit is God. For (as the Apoſtle argueth, 1 *Cor:* 2. 11.) *No man knoweth the things of a man, ſave the ſpirit of a man that is in him; even ſo the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God,* or, he that is God; if the ſpirit that is in man, were not man, or the intellectuall power in man, it could never know the things of man; and if the Spirit of God were not God, he could never ſearch and know the deep, the deepeſt things of God.

Thirdly, As the Spirit of God knoweth all things, as he ſearcheth the deep things, even all the ſecrets, and myſteries of God; ſo he teacheth all things, even all thoſe ſecrets and myſteries of God, which 'tis needful or uſeful for man to know. The Spirit is a teacher, and he teacheth effectually (*Joh:* 16. 13.) *When the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he ſhall not ſpeak of himſelfe* (that is, he ſhall not teach you a private doctrine, or that which is contrary to what ye have learned of me) *but*

but whatſoever he ſhall heare, that ſhall he ſpeake, and he will ſhew you things to come. Which laſt words are

A fourth argument that he is God. As the Spirit teacheth, ſo he foretelleth all things (1 *Tim:* 4. 1.) *Now the Spirit ſpeaketh expreſſely, that in the latter times ſome ſhall depart from the faith, giving heed to ſeducing ſpirits and doctrines of devills.* The Spirit of God clearly foreſeeth and infallibly foretelleth what ſhall be, before it is, therefore he is God. The Lord by his holy Prophet (*Iſa:* 41. 23.) challengeth all the falſe Idol gods of the Heathen to give that proofe of their Divinity; *Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are Gods.* As if he had ſayd, Doe that and we will yield the cauſe. Men and Devills may gueſſe at, but none can indeed ſhew things to come but God.

Fifthly, The Spirit appoints to himſelfe officers and miniſters in the Church, therefore he is God, (*Acts* 13. 2.) *The holy Ghoſt ſaid, ſeparate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.*

Sixthly, The holy Ghoſt furniſheth thoſe Officers whom he calleth with power and gifts, as he pleaſeth, that they may be fit for the work or miniſtery of the Goſpel (1 *Cor:* 12. 8. 11.) *To one is given by the Spirit, the word of wiſdome, to another the word of knowledge by the ſame Spirit,* &c. *But all theſe worketh that one and the ſelfe-ſame Spirit, dividing to every man ſeverally as he will.* Now, who can give wiſdome and knowledge, who can give them prerogatively, following in this diſtribution, or diviſion of gifts, no rule, nor giving any other reaſon of it but his owne will, except God only ?

Seventhly, The holy Ghoſt is ſinned againſt; therefore he is God. Some, poſſibly may object and ſay, This is not a convincing or demonſtrative argument, that the holy Ghoſt is God, becauſe he is ſinned againſt; For man may ſin againſt man. All ſecond table ſins are ſins againſt our Neighbour; and the Apoſtle tells the *Corinthians* (1 Ep: 8. 12.) that while they uſed their lawfull liberty in eating with offence, they *ſinned againſt the Brethren.* I anſwer, Whoſoever is properly ſinned againſt is God, becauſe God is the Law-giver. And, though many actions of men are direct wrongs to man, yet in every wrong done to man, God alſo is wronged, and, in ſtrict ſence, he only is ſinned againſt by man. For the reaſon why any action is a wrong to man, is becauſe it is

againſt

against some Law of God. And if to be sinned against in strict sence, be proper to God only; then the argument stands good, that the Holy Spirit is God, because he is sinned against; especially, if we consider, that there is such an Emphasis put upon sinning against the holy Ghost in the holy Scripture (more if possible then upon sinning against the Father, or the Son) (*Math:* 12. 31.) *Wherefore, I say unto you* (saith Christ) *All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men*; As if he had said, Though you sin against the Father, and the Son, it shall be forgiven you, but if you sin against the holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven either in this world or in the world to come; that is, it shall never be forgiven. Seeing then there is more in sinning against the holy Ghost then against the Father, or the Son, who are God, the holy Ghost must needs be God. For though there is no degree or graduall difference in the deity, each person being coeternall, coequall, and consubstantiall; yet the Scripture attributes more in that case, as to the poynt of sinning against the holy Ghost, then to sinning against the Father, or the Son; therefore certainly the holy Ghost is God.

Lastly, The holy Ghost is the object of divine worship; are not we baptized *in the Name of the Father, Son, and holy Ghost*? Is the Father, and the Son God, and the holy Ghost not God, who is joyned with them in the same honour? Shall a creature come in competition with God? And doth not the Scripture or word of God, direct us to pray for grace from the Spirit as well as from the Father or the Son? (2 *Cor:* 13. 13. *Rev:* 1. 4.) Thus we see how full the Scripture is in giving the glory of the same workes upon us, and of the same worship from us to the Spirit, as to the Father and the Son: And therefore from all these premises we may conclude, That the Holy-Ghost with the Father and the Son, is God blessed and to be glorified for evermore. *The Spirit of God hath made me,*

And the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.

נשמה *Spiritus ex ore egregiens, halitus flatus anima proprie significat halitem, per metonymi-*

The words carry an allusion (as Interpreters generally agree) to that of *Moses* describing the creation of man (*Gen:* 2. 7.) *And the Lord God formed man out of the dust of the earth, and breathed into his nostrills the breath of life, and man became a living*

ving soule. Elihu speakes neere in the same forme, fully to the same effect; *The breath of the Almighty hath given me life*, or, *enlivened me*; As if he had sayd, That soule which the Lord hath breathed into me, hath made me live. The soule of man may be called the breath of the Almighty, because the Almighty is expressed infusing it into man at first by breathing. And therefore the word *Neshamah*, which properly signifies the breath, doth also by a Metonymie of the effect signifie the soule it selfe which causeth breathing. Thus our translaters render it (*Isa:* 57. 16.) *I* (saith the Lord) *will not contend for ever, neither will I be alwayes wroth, for the spirit should faile before me, and the soules which I have made.* As the soule of man was breathed in by God, so the soule is that by which man breathes. Breath and soule come and goe together. Some comparing the originall word (*Shamaijm*) for the heavens, with this word (*Neshamah*) which here we translate *breath*, take notice of their neere affinity, intimating that the soule of man is of a heavenly pedegree, or comes from heaven; yea the latine word (*mens*) signifying the *mind*, is of the same consonant letters with the Hebrew *Neshamah*, and, as some conceive, is derived from it.

am effecti, animan; per synechdo hen membri animal. Piscat. in Deut: 10. 16.

So then, I take these words, *The breath of the Almighty*, as a description of that part of man which is opposed to his body; *The Spirit of God hath made me*; that is, hath set me up as a man, in humane shape, *And the breath of the Almighty hath given me life*; that is, this soule which the Almighty hath breathed into me, hath made me a living man, ready for any humane act, or (as *Moses* speakes) *God breathing into my nostrills the breath of life, I became a living soule.*

Hence observe.

First, *The soule of man floweth immediately from God.*

'Tis the breath of God; not that God liveth by breathing; the way of his life is infinitely above our apprehension; But 'tis cleare in Scripture, That the Almighty breathed into man the powers of life. And therefore he is called (by way of Eminence) *The father of spirits*, (Heb: 12. 9.) For though the Almighty is rightly entituled the Father of the whole man, though both body and soule are the worke of God, yet he is in a further sence, the father of our spirits, or soules, then of our bodyes. And here

Solomon ſhewing how man is diſpoſed of when theſe two are ſeparated by death, ſaith (*Eccl:* 12.7.) *Then ſhall the duſt* (that is, the body) *returne to the earth as it was, and the ſpirit* (that is, the ſoule) *ſhall returne to God who gave it.* The body is the gift of God, but the body is not the breath of God, it is not ſuch an immediate gift of God as the ſoule is; when the body of man was made at firſt, God tooke the duſt of the earth and formed his body out of it, but when he gave him a ſoule, he breathed that from himſelfe; it was an immediate effect of Gods power, not dealing with, nor working upon any præ-exiſting matter. The ſpirit or ſoule of man is purely of God, ſolely of God. And hence we may inferre.

Firſt, Then the ſoule is not a vapour, ariſing from the craſis or temperament of the body, as the life of a beaſt is.

Secondly, Then the ſoule of man is not traduced from the parents in generation, as many learned men affirme, eſpecially, to eaſe themſelves of thoſe difficulties about the conveyance of originall ſin or defilement into the ſoule.

Thirdly, We may hence alſo inferre, then the ſoule is not corruptible; it is an immortall ſubſtance. How can that be corruptible or mortall, which hath its riſe (as I may ſay) immediately from God, or is breathed in by the Almighty, who is altogether incorruptible and immortal. And whereas there is a twofold incorruptibility; Firſt, by divine ordination, that is, God appoynts ſuch a thing ſhall not corrupt, and therefore it doth not; ſo the body of man in it's firſt creation was incorruptible, for though it were in it ſelfe corruptible, being made out of the earth, yet by the appoyntment of God, if man had continued in his integrity he had not dyed. And therefore it is ſaid, *By ſin came death*; yea doubtleſſe if God ſhould command and appoynt the meaneſt worme that moves upon the earth to live for ever, or the moſt fading flower that groweth out of the earth to flouriſh for ever, both the one and the other would doe ſo. Secondly, there is an incorruptibility in ſome things, not meerely by a law or appoyntment of God, but as from that intrinſecall nature, which God hath beſtowed upon them, and implanted in them. Thus the Angels are immortall, they have an incorruptible nature, and likewiſe the ſoule of man, being breathed from the Almighty, is in it's owne nature incorruptible; it hath naturally no

no ſeedes of diſſolution in it, becauſe no contrariety, no contrary qualities in it, as all bodyes or corporeall ſubſtances have. I know the Apoſtle ſaith (1 *Tim:* 6. 16.) *God only hath immortality*; it's true, he only hath it in himſelfe independently, originally; but he derives and gives it as a talent to ſome creatures in a way of dependance upon himſelfe.

Secondly, Obſerve.

The ſoule brings in the life of the body, The life of man.

What is the body without the ſoule, but a lumpe of clay; As ſoone as ever the ſoule departs, life departs, man dyeth and becomes a putrifying carkaſſe; yet ſuch is the folly of moſt men, that all their care is for the life of the body, which is (at beſt) a dying life, they utterly neglect the ſoule, which, as it is the life of the body, ſo it ſelfe never dyeth. The ſoule is the Jewell, the body is but the Cabinet, the ſoule is the kernel, the body is but the ſhell. Will you be ſollicitous, about a Cabinet, and a ſhell, and ſlight the Jewel, or throw away the kernel? Will you take care of that which liveth, the body, and will you not take care of that which holds your life, the ſoule?

Againe, Note.

Life is the gift of God.

If the ſoule which is the cauſe of life in man, be of God, then the life of man is of God alſo. The cauſe of the cauſe is the cauſe of the effect or thing cauſed. But we need not argue it from Logick rules, Scripture teſtimony being ſo aboundant in this thing. (*Acts* 17. 25.) *He giveth to all, life and breath, and all things.* And (*v.* 28.) *In him we live and move and have our being.* Spirituall and eternall life, are the gift of God, ſo alſo is naturall life. And if ſo, Then

Firſt, Live to God; Secondly, Seeing God gives us life, we ſhould be willing to give our lives to God. Yea Thirdly, We ſhould therefore be ready to give up, or rather to lay downe our lives for God. And as we ſhould give up our lives to God when he calls for them by natural death, ſo we ſhould give up our lives for God, when he calls us to beare witneſs to his name and truth by violent death.

I ſhall yet take notice of one thing further, before I paſſe from

this verse; *The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.*

Some, upon good grounds, referre the first clause; *The Spirit of God hath made me,* to the creation both of soule and body; and the second or latter clause, *the breath of the Almighty hath given me life,* to that quickning which we receive by the Spirit to the duties whereinto we are called in this life. The breath of the Almighty hath given me life; that is, hath fitted and prepared me for the severall offices and services of life. As if *Elihu* had sayd, *The Spirit of God hath not only made me a man, but a man for worke, yea the Spirit of God hath quickned me to the present worke and businesse I am come about.* Thus, life imports not only spirituall life in the being of it, but all the furniture, ornaments, and abilities of a spirituall life. The Septuagint render this profession made by *Elihu* expressely, to this sence, holding out a strong assurance which *Elihu* had, that God had both called and prepared him for the service he was come about and engaged in. *The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath instructed me.* Another of the Greek Interpreters speaks as much; *I am not ignorant, that of my selfe I am able to doe nothing, but I have received this power from God*; As if *Elihu* had said, *The Spirit of the Almighty hath quickned me to this worke I am now upon, and taught me what both to say and doe in thy case, O Job.*

πνοὴ δὲ παντοκρατορος ἡ διδασκουσα με. *Spiratio omnipotentis est quæ docet me.* Sept: *Haud me latet non a meipso, sed a deo hunc prudentiæ sensum me accepisse.* Nicet:

Hence note.

God giveth not only the life of nature unto men, but he fits them for all the duties, and services of this life.

We, indeed, are scarcely to be reckoned among the living, if we have no more but a naturall life; what is it to be able to eate and drinke, to heare, and see, and speake; unlesse we have more then this, we deserve not to be numbred or written among the living; we are upon the matter, but dead lumps, and clods of clay. It is the breath of the Almighty that quickens us and superadds ability to doe good, that frames, fashions, and fits us for every good word, and worke; *This is the life of man*; when a man is fitted for duty, and service, when he is furnished for imployment, to stand God, and his Brethren in some stead while he is in this world, then he lives. The motions, impulses and influences,

ences, the teachings and guidings of the Spirit of God, are the life of our lives. We can doe nothing of our selves, till the Almighty bestows a new life upon us; and as we can doe nothing at all in spiritualls, till he gives us a new life, so we can do nothing to purpose till the Spirit acts & stirres up that life in us. It is the Spirit who first bestows; Secondly, encreaseth; Thirdly, excites our spirituall life, & puts the new creature into motion. All our good thoughts and holy actings, all our uprightnesse and sincerity, all our strength and ability flow from the Spirit; untill the holy Spirit workes in us, we sit still; and when the Spirit worketh, we must not sit still; *I* (saith the Apostle, *Rom:* 15. 18.) *will not dare to speak of any of those things, which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient by word, and deed*; As if he had sayd, *My owne workes are not worth the naming, I will not so much as mention any thing that Christ hath not wrought in me by the Spirit*; That was a mighty worke which he was enabled to doe, to make the Gentiles obedient in word, and deed. Christ did not leave him to doe it in his owne power. The breath of the Almighty enabled him; and so he doth all those that are able and willing, ready for and successefull in any such holy worke.

Let us therefore ascribe all to his working and quickening; let us set down our severall Items of receit in our account-books, confessing that we have nothing of our own. This gift, that grace, that ability to doe, to speake, to suffer, to act, we have received from him. Let the whole Inventory of our soules riches, have Gods name written upon it, and ascribed to his praise alone. And if we thus uncloath our selves, by giving God the glory of all, we shall loose nothing by it, for God will apparrell and furnish us, deck and adorne us better every day. The poorer we are in our selves, the richer will he make us. To be thus diminish't is the best way to our encrease. 'Tis the breath of the Almighty that teacheth us, and if we can but humbly enough, that is, heartily acknowledge it, we shall be taught and learne enough.

So much of these words as they are a direct assertion. I shall consider them a little in their connection, and reference both to what went before, and to that which follows after; which was the second consideration of this verse at first proposed,

First, This verse may be connected with the three former verses, and then the sence appeareth thus; As if *Elihu* had sayd,

O

O Job, I have moved thee to heare me patiently, and attentively, and let it not seeme grievous to thee to doe soe; For, though I am thy inferiour in age, and degree, yet I am a man as well as thou, and I have a soule and body like thine, yea the Spirit of God that made me, hath also furnished me; I have receeived ability from God as thou hast, I stand upon even ground, or equall termes with thee, as to creation, and I am not altogether voyd of instruction; and therefore as a man I have a possibility to understand reason; and as a man indowed by the Spirit of God, I have a capability to direct thee about the wayes of God, or how to understand and comport with his providences towards thee. Thou hast been long under the hand of God, and long in the hands of men, who have rather entangled and troubled thy mind then eased it; who knowes but that I, who all this while have been but a looker on, may see somewhat in thy case, which hath hitherto been hid from thy former undertakers. Therefore pray favour me (it may prove in the issue a favour to thy selfe) with an houre or two of patient attention. Take this note from it.

> *The consideration of our common originall, that we have all one maker, or are all come out of the hand of God, should make us willing to heare, and learne of one another.*

Thus *Elihu* argueth; *Heare me*; why? *Because the Spirit of God hath made me, as well as thee*; doe not despise what I have to say, as if you were a man of another mould, or pedigree, the same God, out of the same matter, by the same Word, and Spirit, hath form'd us both. Some pictures are more highly prized then others of the same person, because drawne by a better hand, by An *Apelles*, or A *Michael Angelo*. The fame of the Artist or workman puts a value upon the worke; And the title of the Authour doth sometimes commend a piece more then, in truth, either the forme or matter. But come among the sons of men, all their faces and features are drawne by one hand; The same most exact hand of God hath wrought and fashioned them all, both as to their outside, and inside, both as to the forme of these houses of clay, and as to all the ornaments and beautifyings of them. As we all walke upon the same earth, drinke out of the same water, breath in the same ayre, as we are all covered with the same Canopy of heaven, and lighted with the same Sun, so we are all made

made with the same hand; The Spirit of God hath made one as well as another; This man hath not had a better pencill nor a more skilfull Limner then that. Thus we may argue from the common condition of man in nature, to a mutuall condiscension among men. Indeed Christians, who have higher principles, have also higher topicks & arguments then that, why they should condescend one to another; and (as the Apostle directs, *Eph.* 4. 4, 5, 6.) *Keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.* Saints should *be lowly and meeke with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love,* (as the Apostle there exhorts) not only because one hand hath made all their bodyes, but because they are one body; though they are many naturall bodyes, yet one mysticall body; *There is one body, and one spirit;* As one Spirit hath made them, so they are made one spirit; *There is also* (as it followeth) *one hope, one Lord, one faith, one Baptisme, one God, and father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.* How should all Saints be one, who are comprehended and united under this seven-fold oneness. That we have all one maker in nature, is a very moving argument to meekness, love, and unity, but that all believers are made one by Grace, is a much more moving argument.

Againe, We may consider these words in connexion with the three following verses, and then, as in connection with the former, they are a prevention of *Job's* pride, so in this, they are a prevention of his feare, or an encouragement of him to a chearfull hearing of what *Elihu* had to say. *Job* had been dealt severely with by his three friends, and the terror of God was upon him, he was under much dispondency of spirit. Now (saith *Elihu*) *Answer me if thou canst, stand up, set thy w[illegible] in order before me, for the Spirit of God hath made me, an[illegible]e life; I am a creature, and I am but a creature, I am[illegible]en thou art, I am made of God, a[illegible]d thou art made of Go[illegible]I, I was made out of the dust, as thou art; I am not God to terrifie thee, but I am sent of God, to counsel and comfort thee; my hand shall not be heavie upon thee, I promise to deale tenderly with thee, I am such a one as thy selfe, as I am not worse, so I am not better, we stand alike together in this dispute; therefore thou mayest freely come forth, and answer me, who am but a poore creature, as thy selfe is.* Thus *Elihu* bespeakes *Job* in the sixth and seventh verses; *If thou canst*

answer

answer me, set thy words in order before me, stand up, Behold, I am according to thy wish. Speake freely, and cleare thy selfe, if thou art able, thou hast free leave for me.

Vers. 5. *If thou canst answer me, set thy words in order before me, stand up.*

This verse may have a four-fold respect.

First, To the insufficiency, or incompetency of *Job's* parts and intellectuals to deale with *Elihu* in this matter; as if they were a daring challenge, Answer me if thou canst, doe thy worst. And hence some of the Ancients charge *Elihu*, as if he came upon *Job* boastingly, and spake thus in the pride of his owne spirit, and in the disdaine of *Job*, at once to shew and slight his weaknesse, *If thou canst answer me.* As if (like some irrefragable Doctor) he had said; *I shall speak such reason, as I know thou canst not answer; doe what thou canst, set all thy wits aworke, and beate thy braines as much as thou wilt, thou wilt but loose thy labour, and weary thy selfe in vaine.* Thus the meaning of, *Answer me if thou canst*, is, *Thou canst not answer.* But I suppose *Elihu*, (though hot spirited enough) was yet of a better spirit & temper then to speak either thus proudly of himselfe, or despisingly of so worthy a man as he had before him; nor did *Elihu* look upon *Job* as such a puny to him, or so much his underling as that he durst not hold up the Bucklers in dispute against him. *Elihu* knew *Job* was an old experienced Souldier, well vers'd in the wayes and things of God. And therefore

Secondly, (*If thou canst*) may rather referre to the weaknesse and sorenesse of *Job's* body, to the wounds or troubles which he received and felt from the Almighty in his spirit, then to [illegible]y of his mind for argument. As if *Elihu* had said; *I [illegible]w it is with thee, thou art a man diseased and distempered in thy body, fitter to lye upon or keep thy bed, then to stand up to a dispute, fitter for a hospitall then for the Schooles. Thou also hast a troubled and an afflicted spirit, I doubt thou art not in case to answer me, or to stand up longer in a way of dispute; but this I say, if thou canst answer me, pray doe: set thy words in order before me. I will not lay this burden upon thee, unlesse thou art willing to take it, unlesse thou findest thou hast strength and spirit to beare*

beare and carry it through. Answer me if thou canst, otherwise I will speak my thoughts out, and make what use of it thou pleasest.

Thirdly, I conceive *Elihu* might here intend to let *Job* understand, that he was resolved to put him to the utmost, that he was resolved to bring the strongest arguments, and use the quickest way of reasoning for his conviction that he could; and that therefore he also adviseth *Job* to doe the like, to doe his best, to buckle himselfe to the businesse with all his might, for he was not come to dally with him: he would have him set his shoulders to the work, and gather all the forces of his soule to the battaile, he bids him bring forth even his horsemen for his defence (as I may speak in allusion to that in the 12th of *Jeremy*; *If thou hast run with footmen, and they have wearied thee, how shalt thou contend with horses*) *Elihu* was purposed and resolved to bring out his greatest strength, his horsemen to the battaile, and therefore wisheth *Job* doe so too. Thus he gives him faire warning, *If thou canst, answer me*; doe thy utmost, I am ready for thee.

Fourthly, While *Elihu* saith, *If thou canst, answer me, set thy words in order before me, stand up.* We may take his words as a gentle and sweete invitation to the worke; As if he had sayd, *If thou hast spirits enow left to hold discourse with me, or to reply upon me, come friend, spare me not, set thy words in order before me, I will not be a terror to thee.* Or there may be this condescending sence in these words of *Elihu*; *Doe not thinke (O Job) because I begin to speak, that therefore I meane to speak all, or to have all the discourse my selfe; assure thy selfe, I have no purpose to hinder thee in any defence which thou art able to make for thy selfe: No, though I am come with my best preparations to urge thee, and reply upon thee, as to all that hath past between thee and thy friends, yet I am as willing that thou shouldest answer, as I am ready prepared and prest to speake; thou hast free leave to make thy Apologie, to say what thou canst for thy selfe, I intend not to impose upon thee, nor by any Authority to compell thee to stand to my sentence, as if I were thy Master, or would Lord it over thee; Doe and speake thy best for thy owne vindication, I am ready to receive it from thee, and give thee a faire account of my thoughts about it. If thou canst, answer me,*

Set thy words in order before me.

'Tis a metaphorical speech, often and most properly used for

the marshalling of an Army; and so is elegantly applyed here in this matter of controversie, or polemicall discourse. *Set thy words*, thy reasons, thy arguments, as it were in battaile aray against me; we had the word in the former Chapter at the 14th verse. It is applyed also to the exactness of the heart in prayer, not an affected exactness or curiosity about words, or to word it with God, but it notes exactness or spiritualness rather in meditating and disposing the strongest Scripture reasonings, to prevaile with God in prayer. Prayer is, as it were, a battaile fought in heaven, not in wroth or revenge, but with faith and holy submission. Thus did *Jacob* when he wrastled with the Angel, (*Gen:* 32.) And thus *David* speaks (*Psal:* 5. 3.) *In the morning I will direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up*, or, *I will marshall my prayer*, I will bring up petition after petition, pleading after pleading, even till I am become like *Jacob* a Prince with God, till I have won the field, and got the day. Thus the word is applyed by a metaphor both to disputations with men, and supplications to God. Further, we may take the meaning plainly without any straine of rhetorique, *Set thy words in order before me*. Methode is good in every thing, either an expresse or a covert methode. Sometimes 'tis the best of art to cover it; in speaking there is a speciall use of methode; for, though, as one said very well (speaking of those who are more curious about methode, then serious about matter) *Methode never converted any man*; yet methode and the ordering of words, is very usefull. Our speeches should not be heaps of words, but words bound up, not a throng of words, but words set in aray, or, as it were, in ranke and file. The Prophet (*Joel* 2. 5.) describes a terrible Judgement of God *by a strong people set in battaile aray*. In pursuance of which sence, Mr *Broughton* renders the next words, not (as we) *stand up*, but *stand to it*, as Commanders say to their Souldiers, *stand to it*; and the *Italian* translation thus; *Set thy words in order before me, present thy selfe to the Combate.* Thus he continues the metaphor; As if he had said; *Chuse thy ground, and maintaine it like a valiant Champion; I doe not desire thou shouldst yeild me an inch of ground, yeild to nothing but the truth, dispute every patch with me, stand up, stand to it*; stand as if thou wert to fight a battaile, not only for thy honour, but for thy life. The Apostle (1 *Cor:* 16. 13.) speaks in that language about

Sta quasi in acie, ad pugnandum contra me & convincendum me rationibus. Drus:

about our spirituall warre; *Watch ye, stand fast, quit your selves like men; man it*, be strong. There is such a fence in *Elihu's* exhortation here to *Job*; *Set thy words in order before me, stand up.*

viriliter agite.

Now, in that *Elihu* when he was thus bent to speak, and was so full of matter to speak, that as he tells us in the former chapter, *He was like bottles of wine, and that he could not hold*, yet gave *Job* faire law, and bids him answer, if he could.

Note First.

In all matters of difference we should be as willing to heare what others can answer, as we are desirous that others should heare what we can object.

If thou canst, answer me. It is good to speak in a right cause, especially to speak rightly, and it is very good to learne what can be answered.

Note.

Secondly, *Elihu* looking upon *Job* as a man in a weake condition, speaks incouragingly, *stand up*; as much as to say, *Take heart.*

It is our duty to refresh those that are troubled, or to comfort those that are weake, whether in body or in minde.

We should doe our best to put strength and infuse spirits into sinking hearts and fainting spirits. Thus *God dwells* (Isa: 57. 51. and so should we) *with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.*

Thirdly, As these words, *If thou canst, answer me*, import that as *Elihu* intended to put *Job* to the utmost, so he would have *Job* bestirre himselfe to the utmost.

Hence note.

Every man should doe his best for the clearing or maintaining of a good and righteous cause.

'Tis sinfull to be slight in matters of moment. *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to doe, doe it with all thy might* (saith *Solomon*, Eccles: 9. 10.) we should especially doe these two things with all our might; First, maintaine the truth of God; Secondly, our

owne integrity. The former of theſe was chiefely upon the hand of *Elihu* in this undertaking, the latter upon the hand of *Job*. To betray the truth of God, is the worſt kinde both of cowardiſe and treachery; and to betray our owne Integrity is next to that. There is nothing more unworthy a man, much more a Chriſtian, then to leave either truth, or our own integrity to ſinke or ſwim, to ſhift for themſelves. Thus *Elihu* provokes *Job* to the combate, and ſends him a friendly challenge, which leſt he ſhould refuſe or not accept, he gives him a comfortable account (as a cordiall) what manner of man he ſhould find him to be, even a man moulded and modell'd to his owne heart, or minted to his mind, as will appeare in the next verſe.

Verſ. 6. *Behold, I am according to thy wiſh in Gods ſtead*, &c.

Here we have a very winning argument (as was ſhewed in opening the whole Context) to incourage *Job* both to heare and anſwer. If ever a man will ſpeak when he comes to a buſineſſe, it is when things and perſons are according to his wiſh. *Job* had oftentimes wiſht that he might be mildly heard by God, & not ſo harſhly dealt with by man; his friends having been ſo over-ſevere and rigorous toward him, that he was even compelled in the bitterneſſe of his ſoule, to cry out, *He that is afflicted, ſhould have pitty from his friends*. Yea, when *Job* wiſht to be heard by God, he, with much earneſtneſſe deprecated his ſeverity, (*Chap: 9. 34.* and *Chap: 13. 24.*) *Let not thy dread make me afraid.* Thus, *Job* had wiſht for a milde and gentle treatment from all hands. In anſwer to which deſire *Elihu* preſents himſelfe to him.

Behold, I am according to thy wiſh in Gods ſtead.

Thoſe words (*According to thy wiſh*) may have a two-fold interpretation; Firſt, as we render, *according to thy wiſh*, is, according to what thou haſt heretofore ſpoken or drawne out in wiſhes; thou haſt thy vote, thy wiſh, and what wouldſt thou have more. As if he had ſaid; *O Job, I have heard thee wiſhing ſuch wiſhes, that thou mighteſt be more tenderly handled; that God would not oppreſſe thee with his Majeſty, nor thy friends with their ſeverity. Now thou haſt thy deſire, I doe here promiſe my ſelfe ſuch a one to thee as thou haſt deſired; For as I will be a faithfull advocate for God, ſo, I, who am in Gods ſtead, will not (as thou haſt prayed God would not at the hearing of thy caſe) be terrible nor dreadfull to thee; I doubt not but to carry the matter with thee to thy hearts content. I am according to thy wiſh.*

Hence note.

We ſhould labour as much as in us lieth to anſwer the deſires and wiſhes of others in all things lawfull, eſpecially when they are weak and labouring under ſore burthens of affliction and infirmity.

It is not good to be croſſe-grain'd at any time to our brethren, much leſſe at ſuch a time; ſome love (as it were) to lie thwart in every buſineſſe, nor is any thing more deſireable to them, then to oppoſe another mans deſire. The ſweetneſſe and ingenuity of theſe words, *I am according to your wiſh*, in what I ſafely may, is ſeldome heard among brethren. Some indeed are too forward to be according to the wiſh of others in things that are ſinfull. When theeves and murderers ſay to them, *Come, come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurke privily for the innocent without cauſe*, &c. *Caſt in your lot among us, let us all have one purſe*; They ſay, we are according to your wiſh, we will goe with you. When the prophane ſay, come run with us into all exceſſe of riot, to drunkenneſs and uncleanneſs, they anſwer, we are according to your wiſh, we are for you. It is good to lie croſſe to the ſinfull deſires of men; but to comply with their honeſt deſires, and to anſwer every good wiſh of their ſoules, is a great part of our goodneſſe, and of our fulfilling the law of love: we ſhould ſtrive in that ſence, to fall in with every ones wiſh, and to become all things to all men, both for their edification and conſolation. *Behold, I am according to thy wiſh.*

Secondly, Theſe words are rendred ſtrictly out of the Original thus, *, I am according to thy mouth, or meaſure*; I am in the ſame condition and ſtate as thou art. Thus alſo they are words of encouragement to *Job*, aſſuring him that he ſhould not be over-power'd, nor borne downe by force. This forme of ſpeaking is uſed frequently in Scripture, to note the ſutableneſſe or proportion of things. The *Iſraelites* (*Exod: 16. 21.*) gathered Manna every morning, *Every man according to his eating*. The Hebrew is, כפיך *ſecundum os tuum. i. e. ſicut tu.* *Juxta os edere ſui.* Heb:

is, *Every one did gather to the mouth of his eating*, that is, according to the meaſure of his eating, ſuch was the meaſure of his gathering. The *Nazarite* was to offer *according to the vow which he vowed* (Numb: 6. 21.) The Hebrew is, *according to the mouth of his vow*. Againe 'tis ſaid (*Numb: 7. 5.*) *Moſes* was to give the offerings of the Princes of *Iſrael* to the Levites, *to every man according to his ſervice*, or, *according to the mouth* (that is, the condition and degree) of his ſervice. Once more, *Solomon* (*Prov: 22.6.*) preſſing the good and genuine education of children, expreſſeth it thus; *Train up a child in the way that he ſhould goe*; The Original *upon the mouth of his way*; that is, in ſuch a way as is not only good and honeſt in it ſelfe, but moſt proper and congeniall to the ſpirit, diſpoſition, and capacity of the child. As children are to be fed with ſuch meates, ſo to be taught in ſuch a manner as they can moſt eaſily and profitably digeſt. After this manner, or to this ſence, *Elihu* ſpeakes to *Job*, *Stand up, I am according to thy mouth or meaſure*; As if he had ſaid; *God indeed is infinitely above thy meaſure, But I, who am come to deale with thee in Gods ſtead, am according to thy mouth or meaſure, therefore take courage; one man is like another, the meaſure of one man is the meaſure of another.* There are I grant, ſeverall differences among men, both as to civils and ſpirituall; there are ſeverall graduall and perſonall differences, but no ſpecificall difference among men; every man is according tos the mouth or meaſure of any other man: in that God only tranſcends the meaſure of all men; *My thoughts are not as your thoughts, nor my wayes as your wayes; but look as the heavens are high above the earth, ſo my thoughts are above your thoughts, and my wayes above your wayes*, ſaith the Lord (*Iſa. 55. 8, 9.*) But the wayes of one man are like the wayes of other men, and the thoughts of one man are like the thoughts of other men; There is no ſuch tranſcendency among men; They are all (as men) of one meaſure, that is, not only finite, but they are all ſhort and narrow, even they who carry the greateſt length and breadth among the ſons of men. If we conſider man with man, as to his ſinfull condition, ſo one man is perfectly like another; one man is of the ſame meaſure with another; as *Solomon* expreſſeth it (*Prov: 27. 19.*) *As in water face anſwers face, ſo the heart of man to man.* If man look downe into the water, that face which he ſeeth in the water is like

Juxta os voti ſui. Heb:
Juxta os ſervitij. Heb:
Super os viæ ſuæ. Heb:

that face which ſeeth the water. Thus the hearts of the children of men anſwer one another, heart anſwers heart, as face anſwers face: And as man anſwers man fully, as to naturall ſinfulneſſe, ſo moſtly as to naturall abilities, as for thoſe which are acquired, though the difference may be ſo great that one man may be clearly diſcerned to excell another, yet that man who excells moſt, doth not exceed man; and therefore may be compaſſed by man. It is ſaid (*Rev: 21. 17.*) That the wall of the new *Jeruſalem was meaſured according to the meaſure of a man, that is, of the Angel.* There is one meaſure of an Angel, and there is another meaſure of a man; Angels have a meaſure above men; why then doth he ſay according to the meaſure of a man, that is, of the Angel? I anſwer, he ſpeakes ſo becauſe the Angel appeared in the ſhape of a man, to doe that worke. Now as the meaſure (that is, the Ability) of an Angel is above mans; So God hath a meaſure infinitely above both men and Angels. But men are of a meaſure. *I am according to thy mouth or meaſure.*

Hence note.

Firſt, *Man and man are of a meaſure.*

Let us not make a God of any man, no nor an Angel. The Apoſtle *Jude* reproves thoſe who had the perſons of men in admiration. Men will be leſſe to us then was expected, if we expect too much from them, or more from them, then is meete. For though one man may have a little more height and largeneſſe of parts and gifts, in that which is either acquired or infuſed, then his neighbour, yet what man is there in the world, but hath his match, & ſhall finde his meaſure in ſome other men; yea, though ſome men exceedingly out-goe others, yet their equalls may be found among men, no man out-goes all men. The beſt of men have but the meaſure of a man.

Secondly, Take this Caution from it; *Let no man make a God of himſelfe, or look upon himſelfe as if he were in his meaſure beyond all other men.* We are very apt to doe ſo. And if we have but little more then ſome others, we are ready to thinke we have more then all others, or to look upon our ſelves as if we tranſcended the meaſure of mankinde, and ſo ſwell preſently with pride and ſelfe-conceit; then which nothing is more uncomely or unmanly. Not a few eſteeme themſelves ſo unparalell'd in the

parts

parts and beauty of their bodies, that they deſpiſe others, and many doe it in reference to the endowments and abilities of their minds; they have ſuch a quickneſſe of underſtanding, ſuch a ſtrength of memory, ſuch a fluency of ſpeech, ſuch a depth of reaſon, ſuch power of arguing, as they ſuppoſe none can match them or meaſure with them. All ſuch have forgotten that they are but men. Therefore as no man ſhould admire another, ſo let him not thinke highly of himſelfe, let him rather thinke that though poſſibly there are ſome below him, yet there may be many, yea a great many more above him, and enow that are upon the ſame levell with him. *I am according to thy wiſh or meaſure*, ſaith *Elihu*.

לְאֵל

Pro deo; ergà deum.

In Gods ſtead.

But how came *Elihu* to be in Gods ſtead? had he a Commiſſion from God to undertake *Job?* was he, as I may ſay, Gods Delegate or Ambaſſador? did God ſend him out upon this errand? if not, why did he take ſo much to himſelfe, as to ſay, *I am according to thy wiſh in Gods ſtead?*

Non quod ſe dei loco illi aut deum illi futurum aut eſſe dicat, ſed quod dei partes & cauſam ſit contra illum defenſurus. Ut quia ille cum deo ob ejus majeſtatem congredi verebatur, offerat ſe Jobo dei loco illi futurum. Merc:

I cannot ſay, that *Elihu* had any formall Commiſſion to come out, and appeare in Gods ſtead, as an Atturny appeares in ſtead of his Client, or as an Ambaſſador in the ſtead of his Prince; But doubtleſſe *Elihu* had an equivalent or virtuall Commiſſion, even a mighty impreſſion upon his ſpirit, by the Spirit of God to doe ſo; his heart was drawne out ſecretly, but ſtrongly to ſtand up and undertake for God, towards the determination of this long continued diſpute. *I am* (ſaith he) *in Gods ſtead* or place; in that place which if God himſelfe ſhould ſupply, he would be a dread and a terrour to thee. But I a man of like paſſions as thy ſelfe, and being here in Gods behalfe, and by his authority, in his name and for his glory to ſpeak unto thee, I ſhall yet ſpeak according to the meaſure of a man, and therefore, thou needeſt not feare that my terrour ſhould make thee afraid, *I am in Gods ſtead.*

Hence note.

They who ſpeak to others about the things of God, ſhould ſpeak as God, or as put in Gods place and ſtead.

'Tis enough to make all the Miniſters of Chriſt tremble and cry out in the Apoſtles words, *Who is ſufficient for theſe things?*

Ego juxta os tuum deo. i. e. pro deo, eſt enim dativus favoris. Bold:

to

to remember that when they ſpeake to men, they ſpeake in Gods ſtead. *We* (ſaith the ſame Apoſtle, 2 *Cor:* 5.20. *) are Ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us, we pray you in Chriſts ſtead, be yee reconciled to God.* Thus ſpake he who had indeed an immediate call and commiſſion from God; and they who have not ſuch an immediate call and commiſſion as he had, yet ſpeaking of or about the things of God; and coming in the name of God, they ſhould ſpeake as placed in Gods ſtead. And if the Miniſters of Chriſt ought to ſpeake as in Gods ſtead, then ſurely they that heare, ſhould heare them as ſpeaking in Gods ſtead. The Apoſtle teſtifies of the *Galathians* (Gal:4.14.) *My temptation which was in my fleſh ye deſpiſed not, nor rejected, but received me as an Angel of God, even as Chriſt Jeſus.* Ye received me not only as an Angel or meſſenger of Chriſt, but as if Chriſt had been there in perſon, ſo did ye receive me. He gives the ſame teſtimony of the *Theſſalonians* (1 Theſ: 2.13.) *For this cauſe alſo thanke we God without ceaſing, becauſe when ye received the word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of man, but (as it is in truth) the word of God, which effectually worketh alſo in you that beleeve.* I doe not ſay, that what every man ſpeaketh about the things of God, is preſently to be taken for the word of God, or as if God ſpake it. But if that be his ſcope and purpoſe, if that be his Theame and his buſineſſe, if that be the ſubject matter and ſubſtance of his ſpeech, Then he (as to the body of his ſpeech) is to be lookt upon as uttering the word and minde of God in Gods ſtead. 'Tis a very great means to advance our profit in hearing the word, when they who ſpeak it are lookt upon as ſpeaking in Gods ſtead, and not bringing an errand of their owne.

Before I paſſe from this firſt clauſe of the verſe, I ſhall briefely touch two other readings and interpretations of it.

Ecce ego quaſi eſſet os tuum ad deum. Coc:

Firſt, thus; *Behold, I am, as if thy mouth were to God*; that is, thou needeſt not as thou haſt wiſhed to goe or addreſſe to God himſelfe for the laying open of thy cauſe, the matter may be done between me and thee, even as if thou hadſt ſpoken to God himſelfe.

Secondly, Some render thoſe latter words not *in Gods ſtead* as we, But, *in reſpect of God.* As if he had ſaid, In reſpect of God, I ſtand in the ſame proportion, or upon the ſame terms with thy

 ſelfe,

selfe, for he is the God of us both, nor did God make me of any better or more excellent matter then thou art made of; which he fully expresseth in the close of the verse, as it followeth.

I also am formed out of the Clay.

These words are another argument (as was shewed when I gave the prospect of the whole Context) why *Job* should heare *Elihu*; I am in Gods stead indeed, but I am a poore creature, moulded out of the dust, made up of earth, as thou art; *I also am formed out of the Clay*; therefore stand up, answer me, and feare not; answer me and spare not. The highest and holyest that ever dispenced the minde of God, in Gods stead, to his Church and people here on earth, were made of earth, and were formed out of Clay. The Apostle makes that humble confession of himselfe and fellow-Apostles (*2 Cor: 4. 6.*) *We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might be of God.* The weakness of the instrument lifts up the glory of the superior agent. They who by commission are the Ministers of God, and so in Gods stead, are yet but, as other men, in their naturall structure and constitution. (*Acts 10. 26.*) when *Cornelius* gave too much respect, a kinde of Adoration to *Peter*, he forbad him, saying, *Stand up, I also am a man.* As if he had said with *Elihu*, I am formed out of the clay as well as thee. There is a respect due to the persons of men, and much more to the Messengers of God, yet too much may soone be given; I will none of that, saith *Peter*; *I also am a man.* So *Paul* and *Barnabas* (Acts 14. 15.) when the people were so hightned in their ignorant respects, that they would have sacrificed to them, as Gods, *They rent their cloathes* (as in case of blasphemy) *and ran in among the people, crying out and saying, Sirs, why doe ye these things? We also are men subject to like passions with you*, &c.

קרצתי *Excisus.* I am also [*formed*] or as the Hebrew signifies, *Cut out of the Clay.* As the potter cuts off a rude lump of clay from the whole masse of clay before him, to make a vessel of it; so man is cut out of that masse of mankinde; for though the birth and originall of man is now by another way, then the first mans was, yet we may all look upon our selves as having the same originall; we are cut out of the clay, and formed out of the dust.

Hence

Hence note.

For the matter all men have one originall. I also am formed out of Clay.

I have heretofore met with this poynt, and therefore passe it here.

Secondly, From the scope of *Elihu*,

Note.

The consideration of our common condition, should fit us with compassion one to another; much more should it keep us from insulting over one another.

Elihu used this expression, to assure *Job* that he would deale very tenderly with him; What, dost thou think, that I who am a piece of clay will insult over thee, who art as good a piece of clay as I? why should one earthen vessel dash hard upon another? When we are tempted to pride in our selves, let us remember that we are clay, when we are provoked to anger against our brethren, or to any harsh and rigorous dealing with them, let us remember that we also are clay, that our pedigree and our stock is from the dust as well as others. If our feet be but a little fouled, we think our selves somewhat humbled by it, if but a little dirt stick to our shoes, or hang about our cloaths, we are somewhat ashamed of our selves, yet the truth is, we are all dust, all clay, all mire, we are nothing as to our bodyes, but a little living dust and breathing clay, why then should we be lifted up in high thoughts of our selves? I might hence also give a third note; 'Tis a common Theame, but of important usefulnesse.

Man is a very fraile creature, he is clay.

But having had occasion to speak to this also heretofore, I shall not stay upon it. Only consider, that, as man is clay, so he is returning to clay, yea turning into clay. We are but a little well compacted and compounded dust, and we shall ere long crumble into dust. We are every day going back, and shall shortly be gone back to what at first we were. These considerations should wither and nip the buddings of selfe-confidence, and bring down the height of mans spirit; *I also am formed out of the clay.*

We may take notice of one thing farther, *Elihu* speaking here of his own naturall formation, gives it in this stile; *I also am formed out of the clay.* This is a peculiar Scripture-expression, or the proper phrase of the holy Ghost, not of a heathen Author, Poet, or Orator. They at best had only some rude notions about this mystery of mans originall, His formation by the power of God out of the earth. Which may enforme us, that the Saints and people of God in those elder and darker times, were familiarly acquainted with the doctrine of the creation, and knew well how to speake in a Scripture language, though they had not then the written word or Scriptures; For 'tis a question whether these translations were before the giving of the Law or after; However; they were versed in Scripture truths, and in those formes of speech by which God gave out his minde to their forefathers. Here's Scripture phrase, *I also am formed out of the clay.* And therefore *Elihu*, as sencible of anothers frailty by the experience which he had of his own, subjoynes this Assurance of his respect to *Job's* weaknes in what he should further say.

Verum enim hoc ex primi hominis facta a deo plasmati me. Et ex veteri formatione ex limo mihi ignoscamus. Vatab.

Vers. 7. *Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavie upon thee.*

Elihu had given *Job* much security already that he would deale fairely with him; and here he gives him a promise for it; As if he had said; *I give thee my hand, I plight thee my truth, that my terror shall not make thee afraid, nor shall my hand be heavie upon thee.* The vulgar translation reads, *my miracles* (or what I will doe in any strange and unusuall way) *shall not terrifie thee.* Indeed miracles haue a kinde of terror in them; But we need not put such a straine upon the Text. The word which we translate *terror*, signifies that which is most terrible and dreadfull to man, even the Magistrates throne, the presence of great Princes; of which *Solomon* saith (*Pro:* 20. 28.) *The King sitting upon the throne, scattereth all evill with his eyes*; that is, with the terrible looks of Majesty which God hath stampt upon him. The Prophet (*Jer:* 50. 38.) useth this word to expresse idols or false Gods by; and he calls them so either in a holy scorne; *O these dumbe idolls which have eyes and see not, eares and heare not, feete and walke not*, are doubtlesse very shrewd and terrible things, are they

Verumtamen miraculum meum te non terreat. Vulg:

אימה *Vox terrorem denotat & sæpe idolum, qui in scicrego, judicu, principis elucet.*

they not? have we not great reason to feare what these doughty Gods will say or doe, who can neither say nor doe any thing? Thus he might call them in a way of scorne: or he calls those Idolls terrible things *Jehim*, from the event, because foolish, vaine, ignorant men, did exceedingly feare them, or were much terrified by them, and God left them to their owne feares and terrors, as he spake by the Prophet (*Isa:* 66. 4.) *I also will chuse their delusions, and bring their feares upon them.* As if he had said, *Because they being vainely deluded, have chosen to feare that which was not to be feared, therefore I also will make this my choyce to bring that upon them which they feared, and hoped to avoyd by following and worshipping Idolls, or by their Idolatrous worship.* Now whereas *Job* was afraid of the terror of the true God, *Elihu*, who presented himselfe in Gods stead, tells him, *my terror shall not make thee afraid.* And we may well conceive, that *Elihu* spake this ironically concerning himselfe; for having sayd before, *I am but a piece of clay*, surely then *my terror cannot make thee afraid.* What terriblenes is there in a piece of clay, in a clod of earth? What are the most terrible of the sons of men, that they should be a terror to us? we ought not to trust in the mightiest among men, why then should we feare them, or what need we feare them? *Who art thou* (saith the Prophet, *Isa:* 51. 12, 13.) *that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall dye, and of the son of man that shall be made as Grasse? and forgettest the Lord thy maker.* We never feare men unduely, till we doe one of or both these things, either first forget God who made us, or secondly, forget of what other men are made. I am but a piece of clay (saith *Elihu*) what matter of terror can I be to thee I wonder?

Terror minime potest esse in massa luti. qualis est omnis homo.

In that *Elihu* giveth *Job* such a promise, *Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid.*

Note.

Man should shew himselfe faire and meeke to men, especially to a man in affliction.

It is possible for a man, though he be but clay, as another man is, yet to cloath himselfe, as it were, with terror, yea as the neck of the horse is said to be *clothed* (Job 39. 19.) *with thunder.* He may put on a kinde of dreadfulnesse as a Garment, and appeare very formidable to his brother. Some men indeed appeare

peare to men as a Wolfe to a poore ſheepe, or as a Beare and Lyon to a Lamb. Though but clay, yet how ſcaringly doe ſome men look and Lord it over their brethren! they will rore upon them like a Lion, and rend them like a Beare; clouds and darkneſs are in their faces, and ſtorme ſits upon their browes. There is a terribleneſſe of man to man. Thus the holy Prophet (*Iſa:* 25. 2.) ſaith, *The blaſt of the terrible one is like a ſtorme againſt the wall.* Yea, ſome men are not only dreadfull, like ſavage beaſts, but like devills, they even act or play the devill with their brethren. How farre have they departed from their duty, and broken all the lawes of love, which command us to be as God one to another, in kindneſs, in mercy and compaſſion? Magiſtrates by their place and office are ſaid to be terrible, *yea a terror*, but it is *to evill doers* (Rom: 13. 3.) *Rulers are not a terror to good workes, but to the evill*; that is, not to thoſe whoſe workes are good, but to evill workers. And to them they ought to be a terror; *For they doe not beare the ſword in vaine*; that is, to hold it in their hands, or let it ruſt in the ſcabbard, and never ſtrike with it; *As they are Miniſters of God*, ſo avengers towards men, to execute wrath upon him that doth evill. Againe, Goſpel-Miniſters in ſome caſes are to be terrible, they may be *Boanergeſſes*, ſons of thunder to the obſtinate and rebellious, to the proud and preſumptuous ſinner; they muſt cut him out a portion to his condition, and *ſave him* (if it may be) *with feare.* But the generall temper and carriage of the Miniſters of the Goſpel is meekneſs and gentleneſſe, they ſhould be full of love and of compaſſion, *inſtructing even thoſe that oppoſe themſelves, if God peradventure will give them repentance, to the acknowledging of the truth.* (2 *Tim:* 2. 25, 26.) The Miniſters of Chriſt muſt not deale out terror, till there be a neceſſity of it: And alwayes they who doe well, or are humbled for the evill which they have done, muſt be handled tenderly. *My terror ſhall not make thee afraid,*

Neither ſhall my hand be heavie upon thee.

Onus meum ſuper te non erit grave. Targ: *Quidam vocem* אכפי *ita ſumunt quaſi ve-*

My Burthen *ſhall not be heavie upon thee*, ſaith the Chaldee Paraphraſe, and ſo ſome tranſlate out of the Hebrew, taking the derivation of the word from a roote which ſignifieth to *bow downe the backe*, as we doe when a burden is layd upon us. So the word is rendred (*Prov:* 16. 26.) *He that labooreth, labours for himſelfe,*

ſelfe, for his mouth craveth it of him, that's our reading; and we put in the Margent, *and his mouth boweth unto him.* The mouth of a labouring man boweth to him, as begging that he would get and give it ſomething to eate, and ſatisfie the craving of his hungry ſtomacke. 'Tis ſad to ſee ſome poore men ſo given to Idleneſs, that they had rather ſtarve then worke, and when (according to the propriety of this text in the *Proverbs*) *their mouth boweth* to them, that they would take paines to get a little bread to eate, they had rather endure the burthen of hunger, then the burthen of labour; But I inſtance this place only for that word which ſignifies a *burthen*, or to burthen. Thoſe dreadfull Prophecies which were publiſhed againſt any people in Scripture, are called *Burthens. The Burthen of Duma; the burthen of Damaſcus; the burthen of Babylon*; that is, a prophecy which had a burthen of calamity in it, able to break the backs of the ſtrongeſt Nations. So ſaith *Elihu* according to this tranſlation; *My burthen ſhall not be heavie upon thee.*

niat ab אכף *quod eſt incurvare.* q.d. *opus meum quod tibi imponam non erit tale, ut ſub eo incurvere.* Bold: *Inflexit ſe ſuper eum os ſuum.* Mont:

Others render it thus, *My Eloquence ſhall not be heavie upon thee*; that's farre from the text; yet there is a truth in the thing; As if *Elihu* had ſaid, Though I am about to ſpeake, and have much to ſpeake, yet I would not ſpeak ſuch words, nor ſo many (I hope) as ſhall be burthenſome to thee. I would not burthen thee with Eloquence; that is, either with affected Eloquence, or the over-flowings of Eloquence. Multiplicity of expreſſion is very burthenſome; nor is any thing in ſpeech more grievous to a wiſe man, then an unneceſſary heape of words. They who have a fluency of ſpeech, are uſually more pleaſed to heare themſelves ſpeak, then others are to heare them. *Elihu* (according to this reading) ſpake diſcreetly, and to the purpoſe, while he thus engageth to *Job*; *I will not burthen thee with my Eloquence.* But I paſſe that alſo.

Eloquentia mea non erit tibi grave. Vulg:

We tranſlate fully and clearly to the text; *My hand ſhall not be heavie upon thee.* The hand is taken two wayes; properly, and improperly; it is not to be taken properly here; we cannot ſuſpect *Elihu* of any ſuch rude behaviour, that he would lay a violent hand on *Job*. Improperly the hand ſignifies any act of a man towards man; ſo a mans words may be his hand; A mans hand may be heavie on him, whom he never touched or came neere, yea, a mans hand may be heavie upon him whom he never ſaw.

כפי אכפי *pro votis meis.* i. e. *manus plaga, ut Aleph ſit addititium ſive Hermanticum.* Druſ.

Our

Our hand is heavie upon others, not only by outward violence upon the body, but by any pressure upon the mind or inward man; our vexing or troubling another, whether by doing or saying that which afflicts him, is the laying of a heavie hand upon him. That's the meaning of *Elihu*; *My hand shall not be heavie upon thee*; that is, I will doe nothing, nor will I say any thing, which (in it selfe) shall be grievous and vexatious to thee. We finde *David* complaining (*Psal:* 32. 4.) that *the hand of God was heavie upon him day and night*; that is, God appeared as displeased with him, he could not get evidence of his love in the pardon of his sin; This pressed his soule like an intollerable burthen. Great afflictions of any kinde are a heavie hand upon us. *Elihu* who saw the heavie hand of God upon *Job* already, giveth him this comfortable promise, That he would not adde griefe to his sorrow; *My hand shall not be heavie upon thee*; I know thou hast thy load already. These latter words are of the same generall importance with the former; And we may Note further from them.

Meekness and gentle dealing becomes us while we would reduce others from their error, or reprove them for it.
My hand shall not be heavie upon thee.

The Apostle called God to record concerning the *Corinthians* (2 Cor: 1. 23, 24.) that it was to spare them that he had not come as then to *Corinth*. As if he had layd, I was loth to lay so heavie a hand upon you, or deale with such severity, as your case required. And yet he adds, what severity soever I or others shall use towards you, we shall use it, *Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but as helpers of your Joy*. We shall not come with Lordly power upon you, we purpose not to carry it by meere authority and command, but of entreaty and love; we will not Lord it over your consciences, but only regulate them, that your comforts may flow in more freely. Hard words are oftentimes more pressing then the hardest blowes. Words may weigh much more upon the spirit, then a heavie burthen upon the backe. I grant a heavie hand must be layd upon some, there is no other way to deale with them. The word is a hammer and a fire. But as I intimated before, we must distinguish of persons and of causes, and accordingly lay our hand. God hath not made his Ministers

Ministers Lyons to scare his flock, nor Bulls to gore them, but Shepheards to feed them and watch over them. And especially when the hand of God is upon any, our hand should not.

For conclusion, take here the laws of a just disputation. *Elihu* in this Preface (I have yet gone no farther) gives *Job* free leave to answer, and let himselfe to the battaile with him, and promiseth to deale with him in the faireſt and in the meeteſt way he could wish or desire. It is the observation of a moderne Expositer upon this place, considering the equanimity and gentlenesse with which *Elihu* engaged himselfe to mannage this dispute. *If such a spirit* (saith he) *could be found as here Elihu professeth in this controversie with Job, how soone might all our controversies be ended; but we see most men every where magisterially imposing one upon another, yea magistratically. If they cannot impose magesterially, and make others believe what they say, because they say it, then they will impose magistratically, the Magistrates sword shall make way, if strength of argument cannot. And* (saith he) *when they have disputed a while and answer is made, they will not receive answer, but tell of prisons, of sword and fire.* Thus he taxed the Popish Magistrates of those times, who layed indeed a most heavie hand upon all who submitted not to the Babylonish yoke. And it were well if there were not something of such a spirit, a bitter spirit, an imposing spirit, a spirit of dominion over the faith of others remaining at this day; but that we could with sweetnes and gentlenes treat about our differencies, and say as this man did (though a man full of zeale for truth) to our dissenters, we will not terrifie you with the Magistrates sword, nor will we deale by subtlenes; we will not perswade you by bonds and prisons; *Our terror shall not make you afraid, nor our hand be heavie upon you, neither will we provoke other hands to be heavie on you*; we will carry all things fairely, amicably, Christianly, waiting in the use of proper meanes, counsels, convictions, and prayers, till God shall make way into every mans spirit to receive the truth. *Levaterus.*

Thus farre *Elihu* hath (like a subtle Orator) prefac'd it with *Job*, to prepare him for an attentive hearing, for a candid construction of, and a ready condiscention to what he had ready to propose, and say. *Elihuan exor dium figuliter preparatio.*

JOB. Chap. 33. Vers. 8, 9, 10, 11.

Surely thou hast spoken in my hearing, and I have heard the voyce of thy words, saying,

I am clean without transgression, I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.

Behold, he findeth occasions against me, he counteth me for his enemy.

He putteth my feet in the stocks, he marketh all my paths.

ELihu having ended his sweet ingenuous and insinuating Preface, falls roundly to his business, and begins a very sharp charge. Bitter pills will hardly downe, unlesse guilded over and wrapped in sugar; nor will any mans stomack receive and digest them, unlesse well prepared. *Elihu* was wise enough to consider this; He knew well, what he had to say, and with whom to doe, and therefore layd his business accordingly.

In this charge (to give a briefe of the parts of it) *Elihu* tells *Job*; first, he had heard him speak (*v.* 8.) Secondly, he tells him what he hath heard him speak: And that may fall under these two heads; First, that he had heard him justifying himselfe, (*v.* 9.) *I have heard thee, saying, I am cleane without transgression, I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.* Secondly, He had heard him unduely reflecting upon God, and that two wayes; First, as over-severely observing him, as it were, to gather up matter against him, in the beginning of the 10th verse, and in the latter end of the 11th. *Behold, he findeth occasion against me, and marketh all my paths.* That's one reflection, and a very sore one upon God. Secondly, *Elihu* chargeth him with reflecting upon God, as over-severely dealing with him. That we have (*v.* 10th and 11th) *He counteth me for his enemy, he putteth my feet in the stocks*, &c. These things (saith *Elihu*) I have heard thee, saying; And having sayd all this, he had indeed sayd enough to make him blame-worthy.

Vers. 8.

Vers. 8. *Surely thou hast spoken in my hearing, and I have heard the voyce of thy words, saying.*

• There is nothing difficult in this verse. That which we render, *Thou hast spoken in my hearing*, is in the text; *Thou hast spoken in mine eare*; that is, *I have not gathered up what I bring against thee upon uncertaine reports, But have been an eare-witnesse of them. I have been one of thine hearers, I have stood by thee attentively, while thou hast been complaining so bitterly. Surely thou hast spoken in mine eare,*

And I have heard the voyce of thy words, saying.

Thus and thus, as it followeth in the next words. As if *Elihu* had sayd; *O Job, while I consider thy present suffering condition, I deny not that thy affliction is great, and thy crosse heavie; I deny not that thy afflictions are many, and of long continuance; I deny not that in the debate held with thy friends, thou hast spoken many things well, and hast insisted upon very profitable and remarkable truths: nevertheless, I cannot dissemble my dislike of some things thou hast spoken, and must tell thee plainly wherein either through passion, or want of information, thou hast been much mistaken. And yet thou shalt see that I will not impose my sense upon thy words, nor strain nor torture them by undue and odious inferences to thy disadvantage; But shall recollect and fairly represent some passages which have fallen from thee, and shew thee the error of them. I know thou canst not deny that thou hast sayd the things which I am offended with; and I believe when thou hast heard me a while, and considered better of them, thou wilt not undertake to defend them. Surely thou hast spoken in my hearing, and I have heard the voyce of thy words, saying, I am cleane*, &c.

First, In that *Elihu* coming to charge *Job* about what he had spoken, professeth he had been a serious hearer of him, while he was speaking.

Observe.

What we object against others, we should have good evidence and proofe of it our selves.

There are two infallible witnesses, or they may be so; First, eye-witnesses, such as have seene that which they say; the witness of

the eye is ſureſt as to what is done. Secondly, Eare-witneſſes, and they are the ſureſt as to what is ſpoken. We ſhould not take up accuſations by *heare-ſay, but be able to ſay, we have heard the accuſed ſay it*. Thus ſaid *Elihu*, I have not taken up this matter by the way, from thoſe I met with, But I have been upon the place my ſelfe; I ſtood by thee and heard while theſe words dropped from thy mouth. Many report what they never heard, they report upon report; as thoſe accuſers in the Prophet, (*Jer:* 20. 10.) *Report (ſay they) and we will report it*. They cannot ſay, as *Elihu*, You have ſpoken it in our hearing, and we have heard the voyce of your words, but we heare you have ſpoken it; or you are famed for ſpeaking it. How many tranſgreſs the rules of charity, and break the bonds not only of civill friendſhip, but of Chriſtian love, upon reports of what others report. 'Tis dangerous to report more of others, then we have heard them ſay, till (at leaſt) we are ſure the reporters heard them ſay it.

Againe, When *Elihu* ſaith, *Thou haſt ſpoken in my hearing, and I have heard the voyce of thy words*; He would convince *Job* to the utmoſt.

Hence note.

To accuſe or condemne any man out of his owne mouth, muſt needs ſtop his mouth. Or, *To be condemned out of our owne mouth, is an unanſwerable condemnation.*

When our owne ſayings are brought againſt us, what have we to ſay? Chriſt told the evill and unprofitable ſervant, who would needs put in a plea for his idleneſs, and excuſe himſelfe for hideing his Lords talent in a napkin (that is, for not uſing or improving his gift) (*Luk:* 19. 22.) *Out of thine owne mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked ſervant*; I will goe no further then thy owne words. And we ſee, as that evill ſervant had done nothing before, ſo then he could ſay nothing, becauſe judged out of his owne mouth. When the offenders tongue condemneth him, who can acquit him? (*Pſal:* 64. 8.) *So they ſhall make their owne tongue to fall upon themſelves*. The tongues of ſome men have fallen upon them, and cruſht them like a mountaine, and they have been preſſed downe, yea irrecoverably oppreſſed with the weight of their owne words. The Apoſtle *Jude* tells us what the Lord will do when he comes to Judgement, in that great and ſolemne day of his

his ſecond Appearing, (*v:* 15.) *He ſhall convince all that are ungodly, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard ſpeeches, which ungodly ſinners have ſpoken againſt him*. He ſhall ſay to them, are not theſe your words? can you deny them? or have you any plea for them? Have you not ſpoken theſe things in my hearing? And have I not heard the voyce of your words, ſpeaking thus and thus reproachfully of my wayes, ordinances, and ſervants? This is like wounding a man with his own weapon, 'tis like the act of *David* in cutting off the head of *Goliah* with his owne ſword. He that is condemned by his owne ſaying, dyeth by his own ſword. *David* ſaith of ſycophants and ſlanderers (*Pſal:* 55. 21.) *Their words were ſmoother then oyle, yet were they drawne ſwords*. Such draw theſe ſwords with an intent to wound other mens reputation or good name, but they oftenest wound their owne; And as their words who ſlander others, rebound upon themſelves, and turne to their owne diſgrace, ſo alſo doe theirs for the moſt part, who are much in commending or poſſibly only (which was *Jobs* caſe) in vindicating themſelves. *Surely thou haſt ſpoken in my hearing*, &c.

But what had *Elihu* heard *Job* ſpeake? the next words are an anſwer, or declare the matter of his ſpeech; and in them, as was ſaid before in opening the Context; *Elihu* firſt chargeth him with an over-zeale in juſtifying himſelfe, *I have heard the voyce of thy words, ſaying*;

Verſ. 9. *I am cleane without tranſgreſſion, I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.*

This thou haſt ſayd, and this I charge upon thee as a great iniquity. For the clearing of theſe words, I ſhall doe theſe foure things, becauſe upon this charge the whole diſcourſe of *Elihu* throughout the Chapter depends.

Firſt, I ſhall give the ſence and explication of the words as here expreſſed by *Elihu*, and ſome brieſe notes from them.

Secondly, I ſhall ſhew what matter of accuſation, or of fault there is in theſe words of *Job*, as brought by *Elihu* in charge againſt him, or how ſinfull a thing it is for any man to ſay he is without ſin.

Thirdly, I ſhall enquire what ground *Job* had given *Elihu* to charge him with ſaying theſe things. Fourth-

Fourthly, (which followeth upon the third) I shall inquire whether *Elihu* dealt rightly and fairely with *Job*, in bringing thi fore and severe charge against him.

First, To open the words, as they are an assertion, Thou hast sayd, *I am cleane without transgression, I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.* Some distinguish the three terms used in the text, as a deniall of three severall sorts of sin. First, That, by *being cleane without transgression*, he intends his freedome from sins against sobriety, or that he had not sinn'd against himselfe. Secondly, that, *by being innocent*, his meaning is, he had not done impiously against God. Thirdly, that, by *having no iniquity in him*, he cleares himselfe of wrong done to man. These three sorts of sin, containe sin in the whole latitude of it. All sin is either against our selves, strictly called intemperance, or against God, strictly called impiety, or against man, strictly called unrighteousnesse. But though this hath a truth in it, as to the distinction of sins, yet it may be over-nice to conclude *Elihu* had such a distinct respect in these distinct expressions; And it may be questioned whether the words will beare it quite thorow. Therefore I passe from it and leave it to the readers Judgement.

Further as to the verse in generall, we may take notice, that the same thing is sayd foure times; twice affirmatively, *I am cleane, I am innocent*; And twice negatively, *I am without transgression, There is no iniquity in me.*

I am cleane without transgression.

The word which we render *cleane*, implyeth the cleanest of cleannesse; 'tis rightly opposed to the word *transgression*, which signifieth, a defection or turning off from God. Every sin in the nature of it, is a defection from God; but some sins are an intended or resolved defection from him. Some even throw off the soveraignty of God over them, and his power to command them, not being willing to submit their backs to his burden, nor their necks to his yoke. These are justly called *sons of Belial*, they not only transgresse the Law, but throw off the yoke of Christ from their necks, and his burden from their shoulders, and say (like them, *Luke* 19. 14.) *We will not have this man reigne over us.* So then, when *Job* sayd, *I am cleane without transgression*, he may be very well understood thus; *Though I have many failings, yet I am free from defection, though I have many weaknesses, yet I am free from rebellion and obstinacy. I still retaine an entire love to God, and am ready to submit to his will, though I often find my heart, through corruption, rising up against my duty; I am turned aside through the strength of temptations, but I turne not aside through the bent of my affections.* This doubtlesse or somewhat like this was *Job's* sence when ever he sayd, *I am cleane without transgression.*

Hence note.

First, *Transgression is a pollution*, or, *Sin is a defilement.*

If once men step over or besides the line and rule of holinesse the Law of God (which to doe is transgression) they become unholy. *Job* supposed himselfe uncleane, if guilty of transgression. Sin is an uncleane thing, and it maketh man uncleane. This the Church confessed (*Isa:* 64. 6.) *We all are as an unclean thing*, or person; As if they had said, Time was, when there was a choice people among us, who kept themselves pure from common defilements; But now the contagion and corruption is so epidemicall and universal, that the whole body of our people lookes like a lump of filthinesse and uncleannesse. We are over-spread with a loathsome Leprosie from head to foote, from top to toe. Holinesse keeps us faire, and righteousnesse sweet.

Secondly, Note.

A sinlesse person is a cleane person.

When we arrive at perfect freedome from sin, we shall be cleane indeed, perfectly cleane. And according to the degree or proportion of our freedome from sin in this world, is our cleannesse in this uncleane world.

Secondly, Thou hast said, *I am innocent*; so we read; There are two significations given by the learned, which are of very usefull consideration for the clearing up of this text. First, the Hebrew word which we translate *innocent*, is derived from a roote which signifieth to hide, to cover, or protect; And that two wayes; First, to protect actively, or to defend others; Secondly, It notes protection passively, or to be protected by another. Some conceive that *Elihu* here intended it of *Job* in an active signification, whereas we say, *I am innocent*, they say, *I protect*, and

חף a חנף *Tegere & protegere unde* חוף *portus, in quo naves sunt tectæ et tutæ a vento.* Merc:

and ſo referre to him, as a Magiſtrate I have protected the oppreſſed, I have protected thoſe whom the ſons of violence have proſecuted. Indeed *Job* ſpeaks his practice much in that (*Chap: 29. 12.*) *I delivered the poore that cryed, and the fatherleſs, and him that had none to helpe him*; *The bleſſing of him that was ready to periſh came upon me, and I cauſed the widdows heart to ſing for joy.* *Job* had been a *great Protector* of the poore; And by this word the Hebrews expreſſe an haven or harbour for Ships; Becauſe harbours or havens are places of protection to Ships; Firſt, they are places of protection to Ships from winds and ſtorms, they are ſafe places from rocks, ſhelfs and ſands; a Ship in harbour is under protection from the dangers of the Sea. Secondly, A Ship in harbour is under protection from enemies and Pirats; while ſhee is abroad at Sea, if enemies come ſhee muſt ſhift for her ſelfe, ſhee muſt run or fight, but in the harbour ſhe is under the protection of the State or Country where ſhe arriveth. Thus all Magiſtrates are or ſhould be, a juſt Magiſtrate is a good harbour for all that are in danger of the winds and ſtormes, of the rocks and rage of wicked men. Good Governours are an harbour, and oppreſſors like ſtorms and rocks. That's one ſence of the word in the active ſignification. And taking it in this ſence *Job* aſſerts highly for his owne honour, while he ſaith, I have been a protectour of the oppreſſed, I have been a harbour or a haven to the weather-beaten poore.

Secondly, Others take this protection paſſively, *I have been protected.* *Job* was once protected from all outward evill, from the invaſion of devills and evill men. God made ſuch an hedge about him, that Satan could not touch him. But the ſence given of this protection here intended is ſpirituall, *I have been protected from the evill of the world, or from the evill world, I have been kept from that pollution and corruption, which* (as the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaks) *is in the world through luſt.* And that is a bleſſed, yea the beſt part of a Saints protection, *he is kept through the power of God through faith unto ſalvation*; He is not given up to the defilements and apoſtacy of times or places, the Lord preſerves his ſpirit and his wayes pure and cleane. Our tranſlation, *I am innocent*, compared with this, *I have been kept or protected from ſin.* The one is a very good expoſition and illuſtration of the other; *For innocency is our ſafety, and integrity our beſt keeper. Innocency*

is our faire haven, and ſafeſt harbour. When the windes are higheſt, and the Seas moſt rough and angry, there, if any where, we may ſhelter and anchor our ſelves from the ſtorme and tempeſt. Thus *David* prayed (*Pſal: 25. 21.*) *Let integrity and uprightneſs preſerve me*; that is, let me be preſerved in mine integrity and uprightneſs. And that he had been ſo preſerved, he tells us (*Pſ: 41. 12.*) *As for me thou upholdeſt me in mine integrity.* He that can ſay, *I am innocent*, ſhall have cauſe to ſay, *I am protected*; the innocent perſon is under covert; God protecteth the innocent, yea maketh innocency their protection. Man is never ſo well ſhelter'd, as by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and by his own innocency. 'Tis guilt which leaves our breaſt naked to every dart and thruſt.

Againe to come a little nearer to our tranſlation (though this be very ſignificant) *I am innocent*; 'Tis a negative, I have done no hurt, or I have no guilt upon me. The Rabbins tell us, the word cometh from a róote which ſignifieth to waſh, and ſo the Chaldee Paraphraſe renders, *I am waſhed*; Others thus, *I am bruſhed or comb'd*; Mr *Broughton*, *I am neat*, like a man that hath put on his apparrell decently; ſome are in a ſlovenly habit, or their cloaths are foule; but *Job* could ſay as to his better part and ſpirituall cloathing, *I am innocent*, waſhed, bruſhed, comb'd. I have no filth in my skirts, nor fouleneſſe in my hands. I goe not in the naſty habit of ſin, but in the lovely, comely, beautifull dreſſe of Grace. Thus various is the ſence of the word which we tranſlate *innocent*. *Job's* converſation was ſo well ordered, that it had not a plight nor an haire (common infirmities excepted) amiſſe or out of order. Our tranſlation gives in his mind fully, yet it is not unprofitable to take in this plenty and copiouſneſs of elegant metaphors riſing out of the original words, here rendred, *I am innocent*. But if we take the word ſtrictly, then to be innocent, is to doe or to have done no hurt, to be harmeleſſe, and ſo guiltleſſe of the hurt or harme of any.

זכה *ex Rabinico verbo* זכך *exponunt quod ſignificat lotum & ſe mundare.* Lotus ego. Targ: *Verſus ego ſum.* Coc:

Hence note.

Sin is an hurtfull thing.

It hurts, firſt our ſelves; Secondly, it hurts others in whoſe ſight it is committed, either firſt by the ill example given them, or, ſecondly, by injury done to them; either firſt in their credit, or, ſecondly, in their eſtates. Yea, thirdly, ſin hurts God himſelfe;

selfe; It hurts God in his honour. Innocency is properly that which doth no hurt; Innocent persons are harmelesse persons; no man ever hurt himselfe, or others, much lesse the name and honour of God, while he holdeth his innocency.

Job's last assertion is;

Neither is there iniquity in me.

עוֹן, *pravitas est rectitudini opposita.*

Iniquity is that pravity either of spirit or action which is contrary to all that righteousnes or rectitude which the rule of Gods word requireth. It comprehends both the irregularity of our actions, and the irregularity of our thoughts or conceptions. 'Tis a departure from the way in which, and from the scope and mark, to which we should direct our whole course. Iniquity is an unequall an undue or crooked thing. It turneth others from their right, and is it selfe a continuall swerving from it. So much for the opening of these words, as they are a proposition containing a charge brought against *Job*, *I have heard the voyce of thy words, saying, I am cleane from transgression, I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.*

The second poynt proposed was, to consider what matter of accusation there is in these words. Matters of accusation arise from our evill deeds; *That we are not cleane from transgression, that we are not innocent, that there is much iniquity in us*; these are properly matter of accusation. But here *Elihu* makes it matter of accusation, that *Job* sayd, he was cleane from transgression, that he was innocent, that there was no iniquity in him. And indeed, to be charged with the greatest transgression, is not more then this, to be charged with saying, we are cleane from transgression. To say we have no sin, is very sinfull, to say we are without iniquity, is a saying full of iniquity, (1 *John* 1. 8.) *If we say we have no sin* (Here is *Job* saying so, as *Elihu* charges him) *we deceive our selves, and the truth is not in us.* And (*v:* 10.) *If any man say, he hath no sin, he maketh God a lyar, and his word is not in him.* Now what greater sin can there be, if we consider the force of these two verses, then for any man to say he hath no sin? How extreamly sinfull this is, may be shewed in foure things.

First, It is extreame pride for any man to say; *I have no sin*; What is pride? but an over-reckoning of our selves. When we value

value our selves, 'tis best to doe it at an under rate, and to say lesse of our selves (if it may be) then we are, as *Paul* did, who called himselfe *lesse then the least of all Saints*; Pride alwayes over-reckons and casts us up more then we are worth. Some reckon their temporall and many more their spirituall estates at many thousands (as I may say) when upon a true account they are worse then nothing. So did the Church of *Laodicea* (Rev: 3. 17.) *Thou sayest I am rich, and encreased with goods, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poore, and blind, and naked.* They who are soule-blind, cannot see either how bad they are, or what good they want; Nothing hinders the sight of our wants so much as a conceit that we are full.

Secondly, It is the greatest deceit, even selfe-deceit, to say or suppose that we are (in this sence) *cleane without transgression*; so saith that text of the Apostle (*v:* 8.) *He that saith he hath no sin, deceiveth himselfe.* It is bad enough to deceive others, and woe to them that doe so; but how bad is their condition who deceive themselves! He is in an ill condition who is deceived by others; But if a man deceive himselfe, where shall he have his amends? Selfe-admirers, and selfe-flatterers, are the Greatest selfe-deceivers. And who or what shall be true to that man, who is false to himselfe?

Thirdly, It is a lye and the greatest lye, (that's more then a bare deceit) for it is such a lye as leaveth no truth at all in us. He that saith he hath no sin in him, hath no truth in him; what hath he in him then, but a lye? Every sin is a lye, and he that saith he hath no sin in him, hath nothing of truth in him; what hath he then in him, or what is he, but a lye? (*v:* 10.) *The word of God is not in him*, which is the treasury of all truth; and therefore he hath no truth in him, nor can have, till he hath repented of that lye.

Fourthly, (that ye may see there is exceeding much in this charge) *To say so, is blasphemy, and the highest blasphemy*; Why? Because it makes God a lyar, He that saith he hath no sin, doth not only deceive himselfe, but as much as in him lyeth, he makes God a lyar (*v:* 10.) To deceive with a lye, is the worst sort of deceivings; and what lye is worse then, or so bad as that which makes the God of truth a lyar, and turnes the truth of God

God into a lye. Lay theſe foure conſiderations together, and then it will appeare how heavie a charge is contained in theſe words, when *Elihu* ſaith he had heard *Job* ſay, *he was cleane without tranſgreſſion, he was innocent, and no iniquity in him.*

Therefore, thirdly, conſider a little further, what occaſion had *Job* given *Elihu* to ſay that he had ſayd, *I am cleane from tranſgreſſion*, &c.

I anſwer, There are ſeverall paſſages upon which *Elihu* might pitch this charge; I will only name foure texts, out of which, poſſibly this might ariſe. Firſt, (*Chap:* 10. 7.) where *Job* ſpeaking to God himſelfe ſaith; *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked.* He appealed to the knowledge of God himſelfe in the thing. The ſecond may be collected from (*Chap:* 16. 17.) *Not for any injuſtice in my hand, alſo my prayer is pure.* The third, from (*Chap:* 23. 10.) *But he knoweth the way that I take, when he hath tryed me I ſhall come forth as gold; My foot hath held his ſteps, his way have I kept and not declined.* In the fourth place *Elihu* might take thoſe words (*Chap:* 27. 5.) *God forbid that I ſhould juſtifie you, till I die I will not remove my integrity from me. My righteouſneſs I hold faſt, and will not let it goe, my heart ſhall not reproach me as long as I live.* All theſe are *Job's* aſſertions concerning his owne innocency, And theſe or ſuch like paſſages as theſe, *Elihu* ('tis likely) being an attentive hearer, had obſerved and picked up as the matter of this firſt part of his charge, *Job's ſelf-juſtification.*

Fourthly, and laſtly, let us conſider whether *Elihu* did rightly bring this charge againſt *Job* from theſe ſayings? or whether he dealt ſo ingenuouſly with *Job* as he promiſed, while from theſe or the like paſſages he ſaith, *Job* had ſayd, *I am cleane without tranſgreſſion*, &c.

For anſwer, firſt, take notice that *Elihu* was not the firſt that had charged *Job* thus; he had been thus charged by his three friends before. *Zophar* ſayd (*Chap:* 11. 4.) *Thou haſt ſayd my doctrine is pure, and I am cleane in thine eyes*; that is, in the eyes of God. *Eliphaz* ſeemes to ſay as much (*Chap:* 15. 14.) *What is man that he ſhould be clean? and he which is borne of a woman that he ſhould be righteous?* While *Eliphaz* put theſe queſtions, he intimated that *Job* had made ſuch affirmations. *Bildad* likewiſe was upon the ſame ſtrain with him (*Chap:* 25. 4.) *How then*

then can man be juſtified with God? or how can he be cleane that is borne of a woman? We ſee then, this was not the firſt time by three, that *Job* had heard this charge, and had made anſwer for himſelfe. And as theſe charges, ſo *Job's* anſwers have been opened heretofore upon thoſe former paſſages, and therefore I ſhall not ſtay much upon the poynt here. Yet becauſe *Elihu* reaſſumes this argument, yea makes it his ſtrongeſt argument againſt *Job*, I ſhall a little conſider whether he did rightly or no in this thing.

To cleare (which we muſt remember) that *Job's* innocency had received a three-fold teſtimony in this booke.

Firſt, He received a teſtimony from God himſelfe, and that a very notable and glorious one (*Chap:* 1. 8.) *Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man.*

Secondly, He received a further teſtimony from the penman of this book, who having recorded the ſeverall afflictions of *Job*, and his behaviour under them, repeats it twice (*Chap:* 1. 21. *Chap:* 2. 10.) *In all this Job ſinned not, nor charged God fooliſhly.* The teſtimony which God gave him, referred to his former actions or converſation before his affliction. The teſtimony which the writer gave him, referred ſpecially to his latter words or ſpeeches under his affliction. Beſides theſe teſtimonies which are not at all queſtioned nor can be; we find a third teſtimony, and that he gives of himſelfe. Now though *Elihu* did highly reverence the teſtimony which God had given (if we may ſuppoſe he had notice of it) and would alſo the teſtimony of the pen-man of the booke, had it then been written; yet he queſtioned the teſtimony which *Job* gave of himſelfe. Now, that there was ſome ſeverity in this charge upon that ſuſpition, may appeare by conſidering it in a few particulars.

Firſt, It muſt be ſayd on *Job's* part, or in favour of him, according to truth, that he never affirmed, he was not a ſinner. Nay we ſhall find him more then once, twice, or thrice, confeſſing the ſinfulneſs of his nature, and the ſins of his life. We find him alſo confeſſing that notwithſtanding all the righteouſneſs and integrity in him, yet he would owne none of it before God; and that if he ſhould juſtifie himſelfe, his owne cloaths would abhorre him. Therefore *Job* was far from ſaying he had no ſin in him, in a ſtrict ſence.

See

Secondly, Most of those passages wherein he speakes of himselfe as cleane and righteous, may be understood of his imputative cleanness and righteousness, as a person justified in the redeemer, of whom he spake with such a Gospel spirit and full assurance of faith, that he might well assert this of himselfe, *I know that being justified, I am cleane and without sin.* It is no fault for a believer to say, *I am cleane without transgression, through free Grace, in the righteousnes of Jesus Christ.* Much of what *Job* spake in this matter is to be taken that way.

Thirdly, When *Job* affirmes these things of himselfe, we may say this in favour of him, he meanes it of great transgressions. The words in the text note defection and wilfull swerving from the right way. His friends charged him with hypocrisie, with oppression, with taking the pledge for nought, with stripping the naked of their clothing. *Thine iniquity is great* (said *Eliphaz*) *and thy sin is infinite.* Now saith *Job*, *I am cleane*, I have no such transgressions. And he might well answer his friends charge of impiety against God, and iniquity towards men, with a flat deniall, yea with an affirmation of the contrary; There is no such iniquity in me, prove it if you can. He was unblameable in the sight of man.

Fourthly, In favour of *Job* this may be sayd; what he spake of himselfe and of his owne righteousnes, was upon much provocation, or when his spirit was heated by his friends, who so constantly urged these crimes against him. In these heats he spake highly of himselfe, and though it doth not excuse any mans sin when he hath spoken sinfully, to say I was provoked; yet it doth abate the greatness of the sin. Good *Moses* (who was the meekest man upon the earth) when through provocation he spake unadvisedly with his lips, felt the smart of it, and God reckoned sorely with him for it: Yet to speake amisse upon provocation, is not so much amisse, as to speake so in cold blood, or unprovoked.

Fifthly, *Elihu* might have put a fairer interpretation and construction upon these sayings of *Job*; He might have taken them in the best sence, as *Job* meant them, that he was righteous, cleane and innocent in all his transactions with men, and had not wickedly at any time departed from God. And then ther had not been such matter of fault in what he said, as was broughe against him.

Yet

Yet, in vindication of *Elihu*, it must be granted, *Job* gave him occasion to rebuke and blame what he had said, and that chiefly upon these three accounts.

First, Because he spake many things of himselfe which had an appearance of boasting, and so of vaine speaking. A little truly sayd of ourselves, or in our owne commendation, may be thought too much, how much more, when we say much.

Secondly, He spake such things as carri'd a shew of overboldness with God. He did not observe his distance, as he ought, when he so earnestly prest for a hearing to plead his cause before God; especially, when he so often complained of the severity of Gods proceedure with him, with which *Elihu* taxeth him directly in the two verses following. Upon both these grounds *Elihu* thought (and was no doubt guided in it by the Spirit of God) to cut him to the quick, that *Job* might learne to speake more humbly of himselfe, and more temperately to God. And therefore

Thirdly, The Lord did righteously, yea and graciously let out the spirit of *Elihu* upon him in another way then his friends before had done. He did not charge him with wickedness in fact, but dealt with him about the unwarinesse of his words. *Job* could not say he had never spoken such words, for such words he did speake, though he did not speake them as *Elihu* tooke them. When words are out they must stand to the mercy of the hearers, and abide such a judgement as may, with truth be made of them, though possibly, besides the purpose of the speaker. A man (in that case) is not wronged, he should learne to speak more warily, and not give occasion of offence. Doubtlesse the Lord had a gracious intent upon *Job*, in stirring the spirit of *Elihu* to represent his words in the hardest sence, that he might humble him. *Job's* spirit was yet too high and not broken enough, as it was afterwards. Nor doth *Job* reply or retort upon *Elihu* for this; And when the Lord himselfe began to deal with him, he saith, *Who is this that darkeneth councell by words without knowledge* (Chap: 38. 2.) and *Job* himselfe being brought upon his knees confesseth (*Chap:* 42. 3.) *I have uttered that I understood not, things too wonderfull for me, which I knew not:* I have been too bold I confesse. Though it was not *Jobs* purpose or meaning to speake so (he had integrity in what he spake)

yet

yet his words did beare such a construction. And the Lord suffer'd *Elihu* to urge them upon him to the utmost.

Yet, notwithstanding all that hath been sayd, I doe conceive, that *Elihu* had not the least imagination, that the meaning of *Job* in those assertions concerning himselfe, was, that he had not sinned at all, or that there was no sin in him; But taking his words in the best and fairest construction they could beare, he yet saw cause to check and reprove him, for saying so much, in that condition, about his innocency; whereas he should have been chiefly taken up in glorifying God, and humbling himselfe under his mighty hand. So much for the answer to the fourth query, what reason *Elihu* had to charge *Job* thus? It hath been shewed what may be sayd in favour of *Job*; And also, that *Elihu* might without breach of charity charge him with these sayings.

To shut up this verse, take only two briefe notes from the whole.

First, *The best of men have their failings, and are apt to over-report themselves.*

Our most deliberate actions and speeches have some tincture of the flesh, how much more those which passe us in a passion. Though *Job* spake what was true, yet he spake more then was meete. And they that heard him might take just occasion of offence, not knowing his spirit and the strain of his heart in speaking so. The Apostle *James* saith (*James* 3. 2.) *If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.* He hath a mighty command over his spirit, that can command his tongue; especially when he is provoked. It is a reall part of perfection, not to offend in word. This good man spake many things well, yet all was not well spoken.

Againe, In that *Job* spake thus, under the pressure of affliction. Observe.

In times of affliction it is better to be much in bewailing of sin, then in making reports wherein we have not sinned.

There will no hurt come of that; but while we are reporting our innocency, and good deeds, though what we speak be true, yet 'tis subject to construction, and layeth us open to reproofe.

Lastly, We may learne from the dealing of *Elihu* with *Job*, That

That in all disputations, and matters of controversie with others, we should take heed, that we fasten no uncharitable interpretation upon the words of our adversary, nor adde any thing of our owne to them, nor wrest them besides their grammaticall and genuine construction; yet even those speeches which are true in some respect, if they exceed the bounds of modesty, may freely be reprehended. For we ought not only to doe that which is good, and speake that which is true for the matter, but we ought to doe and speake in a good or becoming manner. Thus farre of the first fault which *Elihu* found and reproved in *Job*, his over-confidence in saying he was not faulty, or in justifying himselfe. In the two next verses, he blames him with reflecting over-boldly and unduely upon the dealings of God; The particulars whereof were expressed before in opening the whole Context, and come now to be further opened.

Vers. 10. *Behold, he findeth occasions against me, and counteth me for his enemy.*

These words containe the first part of the second charge. For the clearing of which I shall first explicate the words, & then by way of observation, shew what matter of charge or evill there is in them.

Behold, he findeth occasions against me.

I have heretofore shewed the emphasis of that word, *Behold*; And therefore, I passe it here; *Behold*,

He (that is, God) *findeth occasions against me*, or, (strictly from the Hebrew) *he findeth breaches.*

The verbe is translated *Breake* (Psal: 141. 5.) It imports such a breaking as is also a bringing to nought (*Psal:* 33. 10.) 'Tis likewise applyed to the breaking of the heart by discouragements (*Numb:* 32. 7.) And it is significantly enough translated here, *He findeth breaches against me*; that is, something or other to make a breach upon me, something to complaine of against me. The word is rendred in these three sences; First, *An occasion*; Secondly, *A Breach*; Thirdly (as the Septuagint) *a complaint or accusation.* We may joyne all three together; for a complaint or

Quærit adversum me et invenit confractiones, i.e. ut confringat et irrita faciat omnia mea studia, instituta et conatus, ut nihil assequar eorum, quæ quæro et instituo. Merc: *Ecce confractiones adversum me invenit.* Bez: הני אות *confractiones, contritiones et quasi abolitiones. Sunt qui reddunt occasiones, quasi esset* תאנות *literis transpositis, alij querelas. Radix* גוא *inde Hiphit* הניא *fregit. confregit irritum fecit.* Merc:

μέμψιν δὲ καὶ ἔρεν. Accusationem autem adversum me invenit. Sept: Qui querelas amat, quærit occasiones unde illis excitat. Boid: Deus studiosè quæsivit ansam me persequendi.

or accusation is commonly an occasion of breaches among men; he that loves breaches will seeke, and seldome misseth occasions of complaint. We say of a man that is of a troublesome spirit, and given to contention (which is also Mr *Broughtons* translation) *Behold, he picketh a quarrell against me*; though I give him no just matter of offence, yet he either findeth or maketh one. Thus most of the Hebrew writers carry it; he findeth occasions to alter his former course with me, to cast me off, to lay his hand upon me, even to ruine and break me to pieces.

Hence observe.

To seeke occasions against another is hard and uncharitable dealing.

Josephs brethren were very suspitious of this (*Gen:* 43. 18.) *The men were afraid because they were brought to Josephs house, and they said, because of the money that was found in our sacks mouth the first time, are we brought in that he may seek occasion against us*; As if they had said, we well perceive he would gladly have some matter to accuse us, and so to detaine us upon that occasion. Thus said the King of *Israel* (2 Kings 5. 7.) when *Naman* came to him with a message from his Prince to desire him that he would heale him of his Leprosie; The King of *Israel* began presently to startle, and thought it was nothing but a meere trick and a device to bring on some further designe, what? said he, *Am I God to kill and make alive, that this man is come to me, wherefore consider I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrell against me.* They may be judged to watch for a discourtesie who desire courtesies of us beyond our power. This made the King of *Israel* jealous, that the King of *Syria* being confident of future successe, by his former successes against *Israel*, was by this device only seeking an occasion to renew the warre. We have an eminent Scripture to this purpose (*Dan:* 6. 4, 5.) *Daniel* being advanced high at Court, it drew a great deale of envie upon him among the Princes and Presidents; and therefore they resolved to try their utmost to pull him down; And hereupon (saith the text) *they sought occasions against Daniel concerning the kingdome*; that is, they enquired narrowly into his proceedings as to the mannagement of that great power and trust which the King had committed to him in civill things, but *they could find no occasion*

casion, nor fault, forasmuch as he was faithfull. They could not pick a hole in his coate (as we say) neither was there any error or fault found in him. When this would not doe, then they would needs goe another way to worke (envie is restlesse) and because they were disappointed in their first attempt about civills, they proceeded to matters of religion; *Then said those men we shall not finde occasion against this Daniel, except we finde it in regard of the Law of his God.* And we see in the following parts of the Chapter, what occasion they found against him. This is hard dealing indeed, and it is quite contrary to the Law of Love in all the actings of it. The Apostle assures us (1 *Cor:* 13. 7.) *Love beareth all things*, Love hath strong shoulders to beare wrongs and injuries, and *Love believeth all things*; not that a believer is a vaine credulous person, giving out his faith he knows not how, or to he knows not what; but he believeth all things to the utmost line of truth and reality, as also of appearance and probability; he that loves is very willing to believe that things are meant as they are spoken, and that they are intended as they are done. Thus he that loves much, *believes all things*, and further, *charity hopeth all things*; it hopes the best, and puts the fairest interpretation that may be upon those things and doings which carry in them at least some colour of suspition; this is the Genius of Charity, the Character of Love. *It beareth all things, it believeth all things, it hopeth all things.* All which stand in direct opposition to the seeking of occasions against our neighbour. And I shall briefly shew how much such practices militate against and contradict the royall Law of love, by seven steps.

First, 'Tis against the Law of love, to be ready to take an occasion when it is given; we should be very slow and backward, in case of offence, to embrace or admit what is offered: though indeed, it is with the heart of man, I meane with the flesh in his heart in this poynt of the Law, as it is with the flesh (that is, sinfull corruption) in the heart, as to the whole Law of God; Of which the Apostle saith (*Rom:* 7. 8.) *Sin taking occasion by the Commandement, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence.* And againe (*v:* 11.) *Sin taking occasion by the commandement, deceived me, and by it slew me*: Sin took occasion by the Law; The Law gave sin no occasion to work concupiscence in *Paul.* The Law is farre enough from being the cause of sin, but it is (by accident

not of it ſelfe) the occaſion of ſin; yea, ſin preſently takes occaſion when it hath not indeed the ſhew of any juſt occaſion. The Law by its prohibition, by the ſtop and check which it puts upon the fleſh, by the diſcoveries which it makes of the contrariety of our corruptions to the holineſs of it, doth many times provoke and irritate, yea enrage and enflame them, but it affords not the leaſt countenance or encouragement to our corruptions. Now this (I ſay) is the wickedneſs of the heart of man, with reſpect to ſin in Generall, that it takes occaſion by the commandement, to bend it ſelfe againſt the commandement: and ſo as to any particular act againſt a brother, to take an occaſion to doe him a miſchiefe, is wickedneſs, and a worke of the fleſh.

Secondly, It is ſinfull to uſe our Chriſtian liberty, when it may be an occaſion of ſin, or the laying of a ſtumbling block before others, though we uſe it not with an intent or purpoſe to make them ſtumble or fall into ſin. The Apoſtle earneſtly cautions the *Romans* to take heed of this (*Rom:* 14. 13.) *Let us not therefore judge one another any more; but judge this rather, that no man put a ſtumbling block or an occaſion to fall in his brothers way.* St *Paul* is there ſpeaking about the obſervation of dayes commanded, and the uſe of meates forbidden by the ceremoniall Law. Now though ſome had a liberty in their conſciences, to obſerve the one, and uſe the other, yet he would not have them doe either with offence to weaker brethren: our care ſhould be, either firſt to keepe our brother from falling, or to raiſe him up when fallen. Is it not then very ſinfull not to forbeare thoſe things (which are no abſolute duties) by which another may fall? And if it be ſo ſinfull to doe many things which in themſelves are not ſinfull, when we know they may be an offence or occaſion of falling to others, though we intend it not; then how extreamly ſinfull is it to do any thing with an intent to make them fall! This is properly the devills trade, and woe to thoſe who take it out of his hand, or joyne partners with him in it.

Thirdly, When any ſhall deſire and even hunger after an occaſion of accuſing others, this is a very great height of wickedneſſe. The Apoſtle ſpeakes of ſuch (2 *Cor:* 11. 9, 12.) where he tells us that he did forbeare his own right, not receiving maintenance for preaching the Goſpel; *When* (ſaith he, *v:* 9.) *I was preſent with you and wanted, I was chargeable to no man.* But

But why? he anſwers (*v:* 12.) *What I doe I will doe, that I may cut off occaſion from them which deſire occaſion.* Some did, it ſeems, deſire an occaſion to charge him with covetouſneſſe and worldly mindedneſſe, that he preached the Goſpel for filthy lucre; therefore, ſaith he, I will doe this, that I may cut off occaſion from them that deſire occaſion to charge me with. The heart of man is full of evill deſires, and this is one of the worſt of them, to deſire another might be found doing that, which might miniſter an advantage to render him odious or blame-worthy.

Fourthly, Which is yet higher, ſome even purſue and hunt for occaſions to calumniate and ſlander their brethren. The good Prophet *Jeremie* had ſtore of theſe ill neighbours (*Jer:* 20. 10.) *I have heard the defaming of many; feare is on every ſide; report, ſay they, and we will report it; all my familiars watched for my halting, ſaying, peradventure he will be inticed, and we ſhall prevaile againſt him, and we ſhall take our revenge on him.* As if he had ſaid, *How glad would not only my open familiars, but cloſe enemies be, of an occaſion againſt me, it would make them leape for joy to ſee me halt.* By his halting they meant his ſinning, his doing that which was uncomely, or not ſuitable to his profeſſion; they watched, they lay at catch for his halting, not to hold him up, but to caſt him downe. They ſayd, *report, and we will report it*; we will make ſomething or other of it, though in truth there be nothing. They had (which may be a fifth ſtep of this wickedneſſe, a ſecret hope that he would halt and give them occaſion of inſulting. *Peradventure* (ſay they) *he will be inticed*, peradventure we ſhall catch him in this ſnare; this was their hope, and, if attained, their joy.

Which makes a 6th ſtep of this wickedneſſe; For ſo *David* deſcribes his enemies (*Pſal:* 38. 16, 17.) *They rejoyce when my foot ſlippeth; for I am ready to halt*, or (as we put in the margin) *for halting*. There is a double halting, a halting by tranſgreſſion, and a halting by affliction; that I conceive *David* chiefly ſpake of in that place, becauſe he preſently adds in the cloſe of the 17th verſe, *And my ſorrow is continually before me.* He ſhewes his enemies poſſeſſed with the ſame evill ſpirit, and in the ſame poſture (*Pſal:* 35. 15.) *In mine adverſity*, or, *in my halting, they rejoyced.* The ſame word is uſed in this Pſalme for adverſity which we had in the 38th for *halting*. This is as true of evill men,

men, as halting is taken in the other notion, for sinning. The wicked are as, if not more, ready to rejoyce at falls, or halts, by sinning, as at falls or halts by suffering. In both these cases (as *David* found in this 35th Psalme, *v.* 15.) the very abjects will teare the best of men (as they did *David*) and not cease. But what doe they teare? their flesh if they can; but to be sure (and so 'tis meant there) their good names and reputation by slanders and accusations. O how contrary is this practice and that joy to the spirit of the Gospel! The Apostle tells us, the Grace of charity utterly abhorres it (1. *Cor:* 13. 6.) *Charity rejoyceth not in iniquity.* It neither rejoyceth in doing iniquity it selfe, nor to charge others with iniquity.

Seventhly, (which is the highest step) Some rather then faile will forme and frame occasions against others; they will forge or fancy them in their own braine, and then accuse their brethren, as if they had been acting, what themselves have been imagining. Such the Apostle *Peter* speaks of (1 *Pet:* 3. 16.) where admonishing Saints to much strictnesse and exactnesse in walking, he gives this account, why they should doe so, *That whereas they speak evill of you as evill doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.* They who have not so much as a shadow of truth, will make something out of a lie; they will falsely accuse, and strongly impeach, knowing that if they doe so, some of the dirt (at least) will disfigure the faces, and stick upon the skirts of those who are impeached. Thus I have given seven degrees of this wickednes, every one of which plainly discover, and all put together, mightily aggravate the sinfullnes of this sin, the seeking of occasions against any man whosoever, much more against any good man. And therefore (which was the second poynt proposed for the clearing of this truth) you see how great a matter of charge was brought by *Elihu* against *Job*, when he saith, *Job* hath sayd, *He*, (that is, God) *seeketh occasions against me.*

Hence note, Secondly.

To charge the Lord with a willingnesse to breake with us, either upon no occasion, or to seeke an occasion that he may, is exceeding sinfull, and dishonourable to his Majesty, neere to Blasphemy.

How

How sinfull is it, that we who give the Lord so many occasions against us, that he needs not seek any, should yet say he seeketh occasions against us? The people of *Israel* (as it appeares) intimated, at least, that God had broken with them, or sought occasion to doe it (this word is used in that text, *Numb:* 14. 34.) while the Lord to shew how ill he resented such thoughts and jealousies of him, tells them, *According to the number of the dayes in which ye searched the Land, even forty dayes (each day for a yeare) shall ye beare your iniquities, even forty yeares, and ye shall know my breach of promise*, or (as read in the margin) *my Altering of my purpose.* As if he had said, Ye shall know whether I have sought occasion against you, whether I have frustrated your hopes and endeavours, these forty yeares in the wildernes or no; ye shall know whether I have done any thing to breake and entangle you, or whether all this hath not proceeded from your owne frowardnes and unbeliefe. The Lord who searched their hearts, and saw the utmost scope of their complaints, found this evill thought lying at the bottome of all, that he surely had put them upon all those difficulties, or brought them into those straites on purpose to breake with them. And therefore, he saith, *Ye shall know my breach of promise*; Ye shall see one day, or at last, whether I have kept covenant, and stood to my engagement or you, whether I have sought an occasion against you, or you have given me occasion to deale with you as I have done. So that when the Lord sayd, *Ye shall know my breach of promise*; his meaning was, ye shall know that I have kept my promise to you exactly, or to a tittle, and that ye only have been the promise-breakers. 'Tis infinitely below the nature of God, to seeke occasions against the creature; And 'tis strange that the Jewes had any the remotest suspition of him as doing so, after they had heard of those glorious stiles and titles in which he proclaimed his name (*Exod:* 34. 6.) *The Lord, the Lord God, gracious and mercifull, slow to anger, abundant in goodnesse and in truth, pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin.* What can be speld out of this name that should yeild the least shaddow of a jealousie, that the Lord would seeke occasions against them. A good Prince desires to finde many good subjects who deserve to be rewarded, but it troubles him to finde any who deserve to be punished; or whom he is necessitated to punish; Now what is the

Cognoscetis confractionem meam; si dici possit latine irritationem; non a verbo irrito sed ab adjectivo irritus, q.d. vi-debitis ut ego omnia acta vestra per hos quadraginta annos irrita faciam, & consuetudinem impediam. Merc:

the goodneſſe of the moſt benigne and gracious Princes in the world, to the graciouſneſſe and benignity of God! Againe, his precious promiſes evidence the unworthineſſe of ſuch a ſurmiſe; all which are full of mercy, and goodneſſe, and patience, and pardon, and tendernеſſe to poore ſinners: ſo farre is the Lord from ſeeking occaſions to charge any one with what is not, that he ſeekes all the wayes and occaſions he can to doe good, and to extend compaſſion to thoſe who have done amiſſe. He even labours to deliver poore ſoules from their dangers, and from their ſins. How farre is he then from deſiring to find them tripping and ſinning, or from urging ſin hardly harſhly or cauſſeſly upon them? yea all the experiences of Saints bring in witneſs againſt this blaſphemous apprehenſion. They will tell us from what they have found and felt, that when they have given the Lord occaſion to deſtroy them, when they have put a ſword into his hand to ſmite them, when by their unbeliefe, and pride, and neglect of knowne duties, they have layd themſelves open to ruine and deſtruction, even then he hath held his hand and ſpared them. Is it not then a great, a groſſe ſin, to charge the Lord, that he ſeekes occaſions againſt us? Yea indeed (as was touched before) the Lord needs not ſeek occaſion againſt any man, for as much as the beſt of men give him too much occaſion, and too often. He needs not ſtand to ſpy advantages againſt us, we lay our ſelves too open and naked to him continually. As in Fenceing, when two that are very expert at that art are engaged, there is watching for an occaſion or advantage to get the maſtery; but if an expert Maſter of Defence be to deale with an ignorant fellow that knows not his poſtures, nor how to uſe his weapon, he needs not ſeeke occaſion, he may have him here and there and every where. It is ſo with the beſt of Saints, when they have to doe with God; He needs not watch for an occaſion where to hit, or ſmite them, for they through their ignorance and folly, lay their naked breaſts open to his ſtroakes every day. Were he not infinite in mercy to cover our ſins, and to pardon our tranſgreſſions, we muſt needs periſh under his juſtice.

Ecce invenit in me vacillationes. Scult: תנו אות *vocat ea quæ pij faciunt præter veſtum, ſed citra animum a deo averſum, &c.* Coc:

Againe, The word is rendred, *Infirmities, faylings, or leſſer ſins*; that's another tranſlation of the text, and 'tis a uſefull one; For as the former ſuppoſeth the Lord taking occaſion, where none at all was given; ſo this ſuppoſeth him to take the leaſt occaſion. As

As if *Elihu* ſuppoſed *Job* ſaying, *Behold, he ſeeks out my little faults, my vacillations, my trippings, my ſtumblings, in a word, my infirmities.* We may take them two wayes; Firſt, for his youthfull ſins, the ſlips of his youth. Secondly, for his dayly ſins, commonly called faylings. As if *Job* had ſayd, *Though I can charge my ſelfe, and freely doe with many ſins and weakneſſes, yet I am not a man chargeable with any crimes nor wickedneſſes, mine are no black nor bloody ſins, no crimſon, no skarlet ſins; I have not ſinned preſumptuouſly, or with a high hand, I have not given ſcope to my luſts, nor indulged my corruptions. I have not pleaſed my ſelfe with diſpleaſing God; nor hath the bent of my ſoule been to breake his commandements, as bonds, yoakes, or ſhakles put upon me by an enemy; I have not rejected his dominion or rule over me in any wilfull defection or departure from his word. Yet notwithſtanding God findes out my infirmities and faylings, and urgeth them ſorely againſt me, yea he deales with me as if I were his enemy, even for thoſe ſins which I have committed through inadvertency or meere humane frailty:* Some Interpreters inſiſt moſt upon this ſignification of the word, as if the matter which *Elihu* charged *Job* with, were that he ſhould ſay God carried it towards him as an enemy for ſmall faults or leſſer ſins. Nor doe I ſee any thing which hinders the joyning of this and the former reading together; for ſurely he ſeekes occaſions to puniſh and vex another, who inſiſts upon his leſſer ſins and imperfections, as if they were great and grievous crimes. From this latter or ſecond ſence of the word, Obſerve, Firſt, in General.

Quæſivit de me parva quædam, imo pene nulla peccata propter quæ, velut ſi nefanda crimina commiſſem, atroci me ſententia condemnavit. Bold:

To take ſtrict notice of the faylings, infirmities, or leſſer ſins of others, is a poynt of very great severity.

Some are pleaſed with nothing more then to heare and diſcourſe of other mens faylings. 'Tis a great fault to be picking up the leſſer faults of others; yet how many are there, who if they can but ſee, as it were, any bare place, they will be charging at it; if they ſee but the leaſt ſcratch or ſore, they as the fly, love to be feeding upon it, or raking in it. 'Tis our holineſſe to take notice of the leaſt ſin in our ſelves, and the more holy any man is, the more quick-ſighted and quick-ſented he is in taking notice of his leſſer ſins (when the leaſt neglect of duty and of the leaſt negligence in performance of duty, any ill frame

of heart, any vaine thought, any idle word, any undue carriage, any uncomelinesse, is taken notice of and corrected, this shewes an excellent frame of spirit, and a great measure of Grace) but it is not good to do so by others, yea it is an argument we are very much wanting and saying in holinesse our selves, when we are so apt to take notice of and aggravate every want and saying in our brethren. Yea, when as Christ saith (*Math:* 7. 3.) *We see a mote in our brothers eye, we seldome see the beame in our owne.* And it is an argument men have beames in their owne eyes, when they are so quick-sighted in looking after motes in their brothers eye. I grant, it is a duty to be watchfull over one another as brethren, and to take notice, for right ends, of the least saylings and faults of any. This is a duty if we doe it with a purpose to pray for them, that they may walke more circumspectly; or that we may lovingly reprove, admonish, and counsell them; as also that we may consider our selves and our owne wayes, lest we fall as they have done. Thus to take notice of the least saylings of others, is a great Gospel duty. But to take notice of mens faults, to censure or defame their persons, to insult over them, or accuse them, this is the spirit of a *Cham*, who mocked at his fathers nakednes. And thus to be critticall about the faults of others, argues that we are careless of our owne.

Secondly, As to the particular case in the text, for which *Job* is tax'd by *Elihu*, that he said thus of God.

Observe.

To say or think of the Lord that he takes a strict and severe notice of our infirmities to reckon with us riggedly for them is very sinfull.

Such thoughts are a great derogation from the goodnesse and mercy of God. The Lord doth not willingly see the faults of his people; Though he seeth them, yet he doth not willingly see them; he is glad when it is with his people, as it was at that time with *Israel* (Numb: 23. 21.) *He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seene perverseness in Israel.* But was there no sin to be seene in *Jacob*? Was *Israel* altogether innocent at that time? Surely they, even they, and even then were a sinfull people, and had their faults, neither few nor small, but because there was no iniquity, no perverseness nor prevarication against God found

found among them at that time, therefore he over-looked all their ordinary saylings and transgressions. As the Lord is so holy and of such pure eyes that he cannot behold any sin, the least iniquity to approve of it (*Habak.* 1. 13.) so the Lord is so gracious and so full of compassion, that he doth not severely take notice of, nor look upon the lesser sins of his people. *David* exalts the name and glory of God at large for this (*Psal:* 103. 8, 9, 10.) *The Lord is mercifull and gracious, slow to anger, plenteous in mercy; he will not always chide.* They are always chideing, that are always spying faults in children, servants or relations; they who take notice of every little fault, shall finde chiding-worke enough in a family. *But the Lord will not always chide; neither will he keepe his anger for ever; He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities: Like as a father pittieth his children, so the Lord pittieth them that feare him.* A father doth not enquire into, much lesse punish every neglect of his child. *I will spare them* (saith the Lord) (*Mal:* 3. 17.) *as a father spareth a son that serveth him.* If a father seeth or is well perswaded that his son hath a heart to serve him, he will not curiously spy out the faults of his service, but saith to his child, *It is well done*, or at least, I take that well which thou hast done. Yea the Lord is so farre from a strict inquiry after such faults, that he passeth by great transgressions (*Mic:* 7. 18.) *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his people; he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.* Though *Asa* (1 Kings 15. 14.) was not through in the reformation; the high places were not removed, yet the Lord did not charge this upon him, for presently it followeth in the sacred Story; *Nevertheless, the heart of Asa was perfect with God all his dayes.* Yea, though *Asa* did fall into severall sins afterwards, imprisoning one of the Prophets, and oppressing some of the people, and in his sickness seeking to the Physitians, and not to the Lord, yet the Lord did not charge these acts upon him; He was so farre from a strict inquiry after his lesser sins, that he tooke no notice of those greater sins, but saith, *His heart was perfect all his dayes.* So in the case of *David*, the Lord would not see many of his sins, he would not blot *David*, nor burden his owne memory with them, but passed an Act of Oblivion upon them for ever.

Sarah (Gen: 18. 12.) ſpake very unhandſomely when the Angel came to her and told her ſhe ſhould have a ſon; yet the Apoſtle (1 *Pet:* 3. 6.) referring to that ſtory, gives *Sarah* a very high teſtimony or commendation for one good word that was mingled with a great many ill or undue ones, yea and actions too; *for ſhe laughed*; Notwithſtanding all which, *Peter* ſets her as a patterne for all good women profeſſing the Goſpel to imitate: He would have them *be in ſubjection unto their owne huſbands*; *even as Sarah obeyed Abraham calling him Lord, whoſe daughters ye are* (ſaith he) *as long as ye doe that which is well.* That one word which ſhe ſpake well, is recorded, yea reported to her praiſe, and all that were ill are buried in ſilence, forgotten and covered. The Lord hath reſpect to a little pure gold, though mingled with a great deale of droſs, and owns a little good Corne, though a great deale of chaffe be in the ſame floore or heape. Surely then he will not bring our infirmities and ſlips to account againſt us, while our hearts are upright with him.

Thus you ſee what matter of charge there was in theſe words, when *Job* ſayd, *God ſought occaſion againſt him*, when he had given none, or that he had only given ſome ſmaller occaſion, and yet Goddealt with *him as an enemy.*

But did *Job* ever ſay, That God ſought occaſions againſt him, or tooke notice of his leſſer ſins ſo ſeverely?

I anſwer, Though ſome acquit *Job* wholly of this charge, and recriminate *Elihu* with this accuſation as a ſlander, yet *Job* had ſpoken words which might give occaſion to charge him thus, (as was ſhewed alſo concerning thoſe former ſpeeches, *I am cleane from tranſgreſſion, I am innocent, there is no iniquity in me*) though *Job* had not ſpoken theſe or ſuch like words, with that ſcope and ſpirit as *Elihu* might ſeeme to alledge them; yet he had given *Elihu* cauſe enough to ſay ſo, while he ſpake more of himſelfe then came to his ſhare, conſidering that he was a ſinfull man, and more then did become him in his condition, being an afflicted man. Upon both which accounts, it had better becom'd him to have been much in humbling himſelfe, rather then at all in juſtifying himſelfe. Now as *Job* had ſpoken words which might beare out *Elihu* in his former charge, ſo we finde ſeverall ſpeeches or complaints concerning God, which may juſtifie him in this. As for inſtance (*Chap:* 14. 16, 17.) *For now thou numbreſt*

Secundum veritatem neutrū dixit Job in ſenſu quem imponit in Elihu.

breſt (or numbring thou numbreſt) my ſteps; doſt thou not watch over my ſins? As if he had ſayd, thou watcheſt me ſo ſtrictly, ſo narrowly, that I cannot (in the leaſt) ſtep awry, but preſently I am obſerved and ſhall be ſure to heare of it; Yea, *my tranſgreſſion is ſealed up in a bag, and thou ſoweſt up mine iniquity*; that is, thou keepeſt the memory of my ſins, thou doſt not paſſe them by, but haſt them ready by thee. When chaſt *Joſeps* wanton miſtreſſe diſappoynted in her luſt, was reſolved to ſeeke an occaſion of revenge, *ſhe layd up his garment by her untill her Lord came home* (Gen: 39. 16.) To lay up the evill deed of another, preſageth ill to him. And therefore when *Elihu* heard *Job* ſpeaking thus, might he not ſay, *Job* hath ſayd, *God ſeeketh occaſions againſt me*, yea, (which is more) as it followeth in the verſe under hand;

And counteth me for his enemy.

Theſe words having been inſiſted upon ſomewhat largely from other paſſages of this Booke (*Chap:* 13. 24. & 19. 11. & *Chap:* 30. 21. In all which places *Job* ſpake this complaint ſometimes expreſſely, always Equivalently) I ſhall not here ſtay upon the explication of them, only for as much as *Job* having ſayd, That God took hold of ſmall occaſions given, or ſought occaſions not given, is preſently charged further by *Elihu*, with ſaying, *He counteth me for his enemy.* From this Connection of the former with the latter part of the verſe.

Note.

To ſeek or take eaſie occaſions againſt another, is an argument that we beare no good will to him, or, *It is a ſigne we look upon a man as an enemy, when we are apt and ready to ſeeke or take occaſions againſt him.*

There are two things which we are very ready to doe towards thoſe we beare no good will unto, or whom we account our enemies. Firſt, to diminiſh the good which they doe, to ſpeak lightly of, and under-value their moſt prayſe-worthy deeds. Ill will never ſpake well either of perſons or actions. Secondly, whom we love not as friends, eſpecially whom we hate as enemies, we are prone to highten their faults, and double their faylings; we (moſtly) look on the evill deeds of an enemy in a multiplying, or in a magnifying glaſs; we make one fault many,

and

and a little one great. A true friend will ſpeak the moſt of what is well done, and the leaſt he can, with truth, of what is ill; He is ſo farre from ſeeking occaſions againſt whom he loves, that he will hardly ſee them, when findes them unſought. A noble enemy will not ſeeke occaſions againſt a man, much leſſe will a cordiall friend. It is no wonder when *Job* is taxed with ſaying, God ſought occaſions againſt him, that he ſhould alſo ſay, *He counteth me for his enemy*.

From the matter of theſe words, *He counteth me for his enemy*, take theſe two notes.

First, *Even good men when they are ſorely grieved under the afflicting hand of God, are tempted to have hard apprehenſions of God, at leaſt to ſuſpect and feare that God is no friend to them.*

And this comes to paſſe upon a double conſideration; Firſt, Nature when pinched will ſhew it ſelfe; Now, man naturally, hath not only hard thoughts of God, but an enmity againſt him. And when nature is pinched, all the corruptions working in man, worke this way, unleſs over-power'd and checkt by grace. Secondly, when 'tis hard with us from the hand of God, then Satan takes his time to prompt us with hard thoughts of God, and to foment that enmity to the uttermoſt, of which our corrupt nature hath ſuch ſtore. What? will Satan ſay, *Doth God love thee, and ſtarve thee?* What? Doth God pretend kindneſs to thee, and deale thus with thee? is God thy friend, who takes away thy friends? is God thy friend, who leaves thee in the hand of enemies? doth he pitty thee, and yet keepe thee in theſe paines? is this his kindneſs to his friend? How can he ſay he loves thee? And haſt not thou cauſe enough yet to ſay, *He counteth thee for his enemy*. Thus Satan takes his time to provoke nature, which is forward enough of it ſelfe to thinke and ſpeake hardly of God, if at any time he is pleaſed and ſees it fit to deale hardly with us. And how great a combate hath many a gracious ſoule both with Satan and his owne heart, to get and keepe up good and honorable thoughts of God in a ſuffering condition, or under darke and (to ſenſe) diſmal diſpenſations.

Secondly, Note.

What-

Whatſoever God doth to or with a godly man, he ſhould maintaine good thoughts, and ſpeak well of God, or, when God deales moſt ſtrictly and ſeverely with his people, they ſhould not look upon it as an argument of any enmity or ill will againſt them, or that he counteth them his enemies.

Let us take heed of ſuch thoughts; *David* profeſſed (*Pſal.* 73. 1.) *Truly God is good to Iſrael, even to them that are of a cleane heart*. He is good to them (that's *Davids* intent there) not only when he doth them good, (as to outward things I meane, and to ſencible appearances, for all is good in the iſſue to the Iſrael of God; now, I ſay, God is good to his people, not only when he in that ſence doth them good) but when he afflicts them, and layeth many outward evills upon them. When, as it is ſaid after in that Pſalme (*v.* 14.) *He plagueth them* (that word imports ſoreſt troubles) *all the day long, and chaſteneth them every morning*; when he gives them their breakfaſt in ſowre herbes, or with ſevereſt whippings, yet then, even then he is good to them, and meanes them no harme at all. Therefore how hardly ſoever God deals with us, let us not thinke he counts us enemies. The Temptation was ſtrong upon *David* to take up hard thoughts of God in that caſe, yea it prevailed ſo farre upon him, that he concluded (*v.* 13.) *Verily I have cleanſed my heart in vaine, and waſhed my hands in innocency*. As if he had ſayd, A man hath little priviledge from the worſt of outward evills by his godlineſs; But the Temptation did not prevaile long, he ſoone recovered himſelfe (*v.* 15.) *If I ſay I will ſpeak thus*, (that is, that I have cleanſed my heart in vaine) *Behold, I ſhould offend againſt the generation of thy children*; that is, I ſhould wrong the whole kind or race of godly men throughout the world, as if hypocrites, or as if God did not love them, or were not good to them, for who is there among all thy children whom either thou haſt not or mayeſt not chaſten as much as thou haſt chaſtned me. As no man can know the love of God by that which is before him, how proſperous ſoever it is; ſo it is moſt unſutable for any of the children of God, to thinke that God is not good to them, or doth not love them, becauſe of the evill that is before them, how adverſe or diſaſterous ſoever it is. For, God having loved his people in Chriſt, he loves them for ever; when once he hath

broken

broken the enmity in our hearts towards himselfe, there is nothing shall ever be done by him towards us, which may speak us his enemies, or him our enemy, though a *Job* in great affliction may say, *He counteth me for his enemy*, And handles me like one too; as it followeth.

Vers. 11. *He putteth my feet in the stockes, he marketh all my paths.*

We had these words expressely (*Chap:* 13. 27.) there they have been opened already, *Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks, and lookest narrowly unto all my pathes.* That which hath been said as to the Generall sence and scope of that text, may serve for this; And therefore I referre the reader thither. I shall only adde two or three notes from the metaphor; *He put my feet in the stocks*, that is, he presseth me with very close and sore afflictions.

Hence Observe.

First, *To be in affliction, is to be in a painfull condition; there is little ease in the stocks.*

No chastning for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous (*Heb:* 12. 11.) To be under a crosse is be under a burden.

Secondly, *Afflictions keepe us under restraint.* He hath little liberty as well as little ease that is in the stocks: afflictions hold us in, they are as a prison to us. Afflictions are a restraint two wayes; First, to our corruptions; yea, through the grace of God, afflictions are more then restraints to corruption, they become the death of corruption, they are appoynted (among other services) for the mortifying of corruption, that it may not live in us, much more are they a restraint to corruption, that it may not get out, nor worke in us as before. Many times, when a good man hath the world at will, his corruptions thinke to have their will too; and when he is at liberty, lusts would grow licentious: Therefore God seeth it necessary to put his servants in the stocks, that their lusts may be in the stocks too. Thus he told the Church (*Hos:* 2. 6.) *Behold, I will hedge up thy way with thornes, and make a wall that she shall not find her paths.* The thorne-hedge was as a stocks to stop them that they should not walk disorderly, nor act inordinately as they had done. This course God takes with

with many, he puts them in the stocks, that he may keepe them from the wayes of sin, or give check to some unruly affection. When we need this discipline, we may looke for it, and 'tis a mercy to be under it. Will you not keep order? (saith God) then you shall to the stocks. Secondly, afflictions are a restraint to our comforts, as well as to our corruptions. As this expression notes the taking of lusts short, so the taking of us short as to lawfull liberties and enjoyments. Sickness upon the body lowres all that this world hath, to us, and will not suffer us to use much of it, how much soever of it we possesse. Many have enough to eate, who never eate in pleasure, as *Job* sayd (*Chap:* 21. 25.) And when in our prosperity we run out and take unlawfull liberty, God sends an affliction, as his stocks, to hold us from our lawfull liberties. When we have had vaine out-goings and excesses of spirit, all going well with us and comfortably in the world, we may expect the stocks next, or that things should goe ill with us, yet for our good.

Thirdly, To be in the stocks is a disgracefull thing; it is not only a paine and a restraint, but it is a reproach; He that is in the stocks, or in the pillory, is exposed to shame, every one poynts at him, and many revile him. Affliction as to the eye of the world, carrieth a disgrace with it, or, at least, subjects the person afflicted to disgrace; And it hath been shewed from severall passages of this booke, how *Job's* afflictions were interpreted to his disgrace; and he lookt upon, as I may say, like a vagabond in the stocks, that God had brought him thither, and clapt him by the heeles for his misdemeanours. Though afflictions diminish no mans honour or esteeme with God, or with his people (an afflicted Saint is as precious and honorable in their eyes, as when in the greatest prosperity; The clouds of trouble cannot eclipse the glory of Grace, nor render the gracious contemptible to those who know them such) yet, as to the eye and opinion of worldly men they doe. *Job* sayd his afflictions were a witnes against him, as if all were not right with him, yea, as if he had been very unrighteous. The stocks are a witnes against a man, that surely he hath done some ill thing. Thus you see there is paine in affliction, restraint in affliction, disgrace in affliction, especially in the opinion of the world, and therefore to be in affliction is to be as in the stocks. *He putteth my feet in the stocks.*

He marketh all my paths.

Which some expound, as if when the Lord had let him out of the stocks, yet he was but like a prisoner with his keeper at his heels; *He marketh all my paths.* I have spoken to this also before; I shall now only Note.

There is no stepping out of the eye or sight of God.

He markes all our paths, not only our open paths, but our secret paths; not only what paths our feet walke in, but paths our hearts walke in. He marketh what our thoughts are, what our scope is, what our aymes and ends are. He marketh not only our day-paths, but our night-paths; *He watcheth all our paths.* Take this Caution from it;

As the Lord marks all our paths, so it will be our wisdome to mark our owne paths.

If the Lords eye be so strict over all our wayes, shall we be careless of our wayes? If he look upon our walkings, shall not we look to our walkings? There are many arguments (from love, from returns of thankfulness for received benefits) which should provoke the people of God to heed and marke their own wayes; but surely this ought to be a very cogent argument, because God marks them, *He marketh all our paths.* Therefore as the Apostle gives counsel and admonition (*Eph.* 5. 15.) *See that ye walke circumspectly, not as fooles but as wise.* What our wisdome is, yea whether we have any wisdome, whether we are wise or fooles will be seene by our walkings. Some can talke and discourse very wisely, who yet walke very foolishly, and whose whole course is folly.

So much for the opening of this charge brought by *Elihu* against *Job*, his over-justifying of himselfe, and his reflecting upon the goodnesse and love of God. *Elihu* proceeds yet further to deale with and refute him, as also to answer for God. *Behold, in this thou art not just*, &c. This I charge thee with and will prove it, thou hast spoken sinfully and unbecommingly of God and of thy selfe in all this.

JOB,

JOB. Chap. 33. Vers. 12, 13.

Behold, in this thou art not just: I will answer thee, That God is greater then man.

Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not account of any of his matters.

IN these two verses *Elihu* gives the first part of his answer, wherein we may take notice of these five things; First, He tells *Job* that he had erred and was mistaken, *Behold, in this thou art not just.* Secondly, He sheweth him wherein he had been mistaken, or what his error was; *In this thou art not just*, or, *Behold this, thou are not just in it.* Thirdly, *Elihu* lays downe the generall ground, upon which he intended to convince *Job* of his error and mistake, The greatnesse of God, *I will answer thee that God is greater then man.* Fourthly, from that ground he drawes out a check or reproofe, in the beginning of the 13th verse, *Why dost thou strive against him?* Fifthly and lastly, He gives a reason of that reproofe, which ariseth also out of the former ground, the unquestionable Soveraignty of God; *For he giveth not account of any of his matters.*

Vers. 12. *Behold, in this, thou art not just.*

Behold, he calls for serious attention, and diligent consideration; *Behold This*; so the Hebrew rendred strictly; we render, *Behold, in this thou art not just*; What is this? what's the antecedent to this? we may assigne the antecedent in three things, or make it three-fold, according to what *Elihu* hath layd downe before in way of charge against *Job* in the former Context; First, *This*, that thou hast boasted thy selfe so much of thy innocency and integrity. Vers. 8th. *Thou hast spoken in my hearing, and I have heard the voyce of thy words, saying, I am cleane without transgression*, &c.

Behold, in this thou art not just.

Secondly, *In this*, That is, in that thou hast complained so much

much of the severity of Gods dealings and proceedings with thee, (10. & 11.) *Behold, he findeth occasion against me, and accounteth me for his enemy; He putteth my feet in the stocks, he marketh all my paths; Behold, in this thou art not just.*

Hoc nomine justificat eos, quod deum in jus provocare ausus est. Merc.

There is a third antecedent, which we may take up from severall passages in the former part of the Booke; and that is, because thou hast so often and so importunately desired to plead with God, and hast made so many suites for a hearing with him, as if thou hadst somewhat to say, which might acquit thy selfe and shew reason, why God should not deale thus with thee; For though *Job* did not desire to plead with God as having any intent to accuse him of doing him wrong, yet he was therefore to be blamed, because he desired to plead with him; seeing it becomes man to submit to the judgement of God without murmuring or complaining. So then *Elihu* had cause to charge him with this; God indeed passed it by, as knowing it did not proceed (as in the wicked) from malice, but from weakness and ignorance, as *Job* also himselfe humbly confessed at last. *Behold* (thou hast too often called for Justice) *in this thou art not just.*

Mr *Broughton* renders, *Loe here thou art not in the right*. These words, *in this, or here*, may also have a negative reference to what *Job* had been charged with before by his friends. As if *Elihu* had sayd; *I doe not charge thee with such crimes as thy friends have loaded thee with heretofore, I doe not burden thee with grosse impiety, nor with hypocrisie, I doe not tell thee thou hast oppressed the poore, or wronged the widdow and the fatherlesse, I have nothing of this sort to say against thee. But in this or here, I have somewhat to say, wherein my judgement also is that thou art not just, nor in the right; for however thou art otherwise, or in other things upright and righteous, however just thou hast been in thy transactions with men, and pure in thy worship toward God, yet in this I am sure, and I dare say it openly and avowedly, thou art no wayes justifiable, much lesse just in that thou hast cryed up thy owne innocency, and spoken so much of the hard dealings of God with thee; yea, hast been so bold as to desire a day of hearing even before God himselfe.* Let this be the Question or matter under debate; *Whether or no, Job speaking thus highly of himselfe, and thus boldly of God, hath done right or no?* *Elihu* undertakes the negative, he engageth to prove that *Job* had not done well, or right, how innocent soever he was, in speaking so

much of his own innocency, or (how hardly soever God dealt with him) in making so many complaints of his severity, *Elihu* undertakes to prove this negative; and *Job* never durst undertake the affirmative, that he had done right or well in speaking or doing so; and therefore in the close of the business he sits downe convinced, that he had been too bold with God, and too forward in justifying himselfe.

His argument (which runs through this whole discourse) to make good his negative assertion, may be formed up thus; *He that speakes much of his owne righteousnesse, and seemes to reflect upon the righteousnesse of God, at least that God hath been over-rigorous with him, is not just, nor justifiable in this.*

But thou O Job hast spoken thus of thy selfe, and thus of God in the extremity of thy paine, and in the anguish of thy spirit.

Therefore in this thou art not just, nor justifiable. No man of understanding can take thy part, or be an Advocate for thee in this matter; As for me, I must needs be and am resolved to be an Advocate for God against thee. The Major or first proposition is not expresst in the text, the conclusion is given in the beginning of the 12th verse, and the assumption or 2d proposition, is collected from *Job's* owne mouth in severall places of this Booke.

Againe, besides the generall scope of the words, and the tendency of *Elihu* in this dispute, we may consider the manner of his speech, how he deales with *Job*; *Behold, in this thou art not just*. In this manner of treating with *Job*, the sweetnesse of his spirit, and likewise the boldnesse of it are observable. These two vertues or excellencies of an Advocate, shew themselves plainly in this one passage; *Behold, in this thou art not just*. For consider, First, He expresseth his reproofe negatively, he doth not say, Behold, in this thou art wicked, or thou hast impiously blasphem'd the name of God, but he speakes at as low a rate, as may be, *Behold, in this thou art not just, or justifiable*, thou hast not done right, or thou art not right; there is a great good temper of spirit, and a mixture of much meeknesse in such negative expressions: it being much lesse to say to a man, *in this thou art not just nor justifiable*, then to say positively or directly, in this thou art unjust, and deserv'st to be condemned. For though there be no difference in the thing between not being just and being unjust, yet there is much more mildnesse in the words; and a man takes lesse offence, when

when told that he is not juſt, then in being told that he is unjuſt. The imputing of a crime to a man, is more and worſe, then the denying him a vertue, or that he is vertuous.

Hence note.

We ought to temper our reproofes with much gentleneſſe and meekneſſe.

We ſhould not ſpeake cutting words, if other words will ſerve the turne. Thus the Apoſtle directs us (*Gal: 6. 1.*) *Brethren, if a man be overtaken with a fault, ye which are ſpirituall, reſtore ſuch a one with the ſpirit of meekneſſe, conſidering thy ſelfe, leſt thou alſo be tempted*; deale as gently with a fallen brother, as thou wouldeſt with a man whoſe bones are diſlocated or broken (ſo much the metaphor there uſed imports) There is a time indeed when we muſt rebuke (as the Apoſtle gives direction (*Tit: 1. 13.*) *ſharply*, or cuttingly; we muſt goe to the quicke, *that they may be found in the faith*: but there is a great regard to be had to the ſtate and ſpirits of thoſe with whom we have to deale. As it is our duty to receive the word with meekneſſe (*James 1. 21.* ſome receive the word proudly, riggidly, in the worſt ſence they can, yea they receive it rebellingly, now as we ought to receive the word with meekneſſe) ſo 'tis good to ſpeake the word with meekneſſe, with as much meekneſſe and tenderneſſe as the caſe will beare.

Secondly, conſider this manner of ſpeaking, *Behold, in this thou art not juſt*, *Elihu* tells him plainly of his faults, he reported them before, and here he applyed them home to his perſon; *Behold, in this*, thou remembereſt thy owne words; Thou canſt not but take notice what thou haſt ſpoken; now I tell thee, *in this thing thou art not juſt*; *Elihu* doth not ſpeak doubtingly nor fearefully, nor doth he tell *Job* what the thoughts of others were upon the matter, but he tells him directly, categorically, plainly from himſelfe, *in this thou art not juſt*.

Hence note.

We are to hold out our convictions and reproofes with plainneſſe, and to lay our finger upon the very ſore; Behold, in this (or that) *thou art not juſt.*

We are to ſpeake meekly, but not at randome, not uncertainly, not flatteringly (*Pro: 29. 25.*) *A man that flattereth his neighbour, ſpreadeth a net for his feete*; he doth but intangle and inſnare him, in ſtead either of counſelling or comforting him. When a man is our, it is beſt to tell him ſo; how elſe ſhall he get in againe? Flattering words are inſnaring words; *Behold, in this thou art not right.* One of the Ancients ſpeaking to this poynt, tells us; *It is more ſinfull to flatter thoſe that doe evill, then to doe evill our ſelves.* And, ſurely it argueth a more corrupt mind, or a worſer principle to dawbe ſinners with the untempered morter of flattery, then to be dawbed with the mire of any particular ſin or iniquity. A flatterer is a dawber and pillow-ſower; A flatterer hath not a true ſight of ſin himſelfe, and he doth what he can to keepe others from the ſight of it. It is ſafer to make ſinners ſmart then itch. *David* invited a wounding rather then ſuch a skinning of his ſore (*Pſal: 141. 5.*) *Let the righteous ſmite me, it ſhall be a kindneſs*, (that is, I will not only take it kindly, but ſhall find it a kindneſs) *and let him reprove me, and it ſhall be an excellent oyle, which ſhall breake my head*; that is, it ſhall be ſo farre from hurting that it ſhall be (through Grace) a healing to me. No man had ever any cauſe to repent, either the giving or receiving of a wiſe and ſeaſonable reproofe.

Majore ſupplicio dignus eſt qui male agentes laudat; quam qui male agit. Chryſoſt.

Behold, in this thou art not juſt.

But what is it, not to be juſt? I anſwer, not to be juſt, is not to give every man his due; yet *Elihu* intends it chiefly, of what *Job* had ſpoken unduely to God; *Behold, in this thou art not juſt.*

Hence note.

They who doe not give God his right are unjuſt, as well as they who doe not give men their right.

Yea not to give God his right, is by ſo much the greater injuſtice, then not to give man his right, by how much God is greater then man; looke how much God is higher and greater then man, by ſo much is their ſin higher and greater, who give not God his right, then theirs, who give not man his right. Many thinke they are very juſt, very honeſt men, becauſe they give every man his due, they wrong, they defraud no man, not any neighbour, not any brother with whom they deale: come and charge them if you can. 'Tis very good, & more then moſt men can truly ſay of themſelves,

selves, when a man is able to say he is just to his neighbour, no man can challenge him of injustice. But many say this, who take no notice, how unjust they are to God; they are not at all sensible, how often they have denied God his right, nor how often they have done God wrong; they take no notice of this. They have second-table Justice, but they have not first-table Justice; this is it that *Elihu* chargeth *Job* with. His friends charged him with second-table injustice, that he was an oppressor, &c. but *Elihu* charged him with first-table injustice, that he had done wrong to God. Therefore, remember, not to give God his due feare, his due love, his due trust and submission (these are his rights by the first Commandement) is to be unjust; not to give God due worship according to his will, is to be unjust, because in so doing you deny him his right in the second Commandement; not to speake or thinke reverently of the name, of the word, wayes, and ordinances of God, is to be unjust to God, because you deny him his right in the third Commandement. To breake the Sabboath, to steale Gods time, and convert it to your owne private use, to put it in your owne purses, as many doe, this is sacriledge, this is to be unjust to God, because you give him not his right, nor that which is due to him by the fourth Commandement; so not to submit to the rod of God, not to be quiet under the chastizings of God, not to take all well at Gods hand whatsoever he doth with us, or to us, is to be unjust to God, because we then deny him the right of his soveraignty, and of that just power which he hath over his creatures.

Behold, in this thou art not just.

Elihu proceeds to give an account, distinctly, wherein this injustice lay.

I will answer thee, or (as Mr *Broughton*) *I will tell thee, God is greater then man.*

We render well, *I will answer thee*, &c. There is a four-fold way of answering; First, by information to a Question propounded. Every Question would have an answer. Secondly, by solution of an objection made; When any thing is objected against what is sayd or held; then to untie the knot, is to answer. Thirdly, there is an answering by confutation of a false opinion or tenet;

net; thus whole bookes that hold unsound or heterodox opinions, are to be answered; Fourthly, there is an answer by way of reproofe, or reprehension of faults or mistakes, either in speech or practice. *Elihu* his answer was of this last sort. For he observing how *Job* had spoken, and what his carriage and demeanour had been, gives him a reprehensive answer, *Behold, in this thou art not just, I will answer thee.* And what was his answer? even this, *God is greater then man*; or, *I will answer thee, that God is more then man*; The roote of the word signifies to encrease or grow Great; but God is great, not by growth or encrease, but in his essence and being. He who is infinite in greatness, can have no addition to his greatness. God is the Great one, and he only is great. All men and things put together, are not only little nothings, but lesse then nothing compared to the Great God. Further, the word by which God is here exprest, notes the great power of God, the strength of God; in opposition to which the word by which *man* is here exprest, notes his weakness and pitifull frailty. And therefore Mr *Broughton* translates strictly according to the propriety of the Originall; *I must tell thee the puissant is greater then the sorrowfull man*; we say barely, *God*, he, *the puissant*, or the strong, the mighty God; we say, *God is greater then man*, he, *then sorrowfull man.* There are three originall words, as I have sometime noted, which expresse *man*; *Adam*, importing the matter of which man was made, *earth*; *Ish* noteing his best perfection; and *Enosh*, intimating that sad condition which was brought upon us by the fall; *Surely the puissant is greater then sorrowfull man.*

Respondebo tibi et reprehendam, idq; hac plane insolubili ratione quia amplior est deus et major multis partibus homine; ירכון i. e. אדל *amplior est.* Merc:

But is not God greater then (*Ish*) The wisest and most accomplisht, the most perfect and mightiest of men, as well as he is greater then (*Enosh*) *sorrowfull or miserable man?* I answer, the word *Enosh* is not to be taken exclusively, as if when he saith, *the puissant is greater then the sorrowfull man*, he were not also greater then the greatest or strongest man; but it notes, that all men, or man considered in his best estate, is but weaknesse and wretchedness, when put in the ballance with *the great God*, or *the puissant. Lord what is man* (saith *David*, one of the best and greatest of men, a King, *Psal:* 144. 3.) *that thou takest knowledge of him? or the son of man that thou makest account of him?* Now if it be even too much that God should make any account of man,

 then

then what is any man in account to God? O what man or Angel is able to caſt up the account, how much the great God *is greater or more then man*. The words are plaine, only there is ſomewhat yet to be added or touched upon, to cleare up further the ſcope of *Elihu* in ſpeaking thus to *Job*, which I ſhall endeavour to cleare and make out, when I have given a note or two from the words, as they are a plaine propoſition; *God is greater then man*.

Hence Obſerve.

First, *God is Great*.

He that is greater then the Greateſt, is certainly great; he that is higher then the higheſt, is high. This greatneſs of God is every where celebrated in Scripture. The Prophet (*Iſa:* 12. 6.) calls *the inhabitant of Zion to cry out and ſhout*; why? *For great is the holy One of Iſrael in the midſt of thee*; that is, the holy one of *Iſrael* who is in the midſt of thee, is both Great in himſelfe, and declares his greatneſs in thee. (*Mal:* 1. 14.) *I am a great King, ſaith the Lord of hoſts, and my name is dreadfull among the heathens*. I need not ſtay to give particular Scriptures to hold forth the attribute of Gods greatneſs, his greatneſs runs through all his attributes. Whatſoever God is, he is great in it; He is great in power (*Pſal:* 56. 3. *Pſal:* 147. 5.) he is great in all ſorts of power, great in authoritative power, and great in executative power. As God commandeth what he pleaſeth to be done, ſo he can doe what he commandeth. The power of man in doing is not alwayes commenſurate with his power in commanding; but Gods is. He needs no helpe, much leſſe any leave to execute what he willeth. Againe, God is great in wiſdome, he hath the compaſſe of all things in his underſtanding; God is ſo wiſe, that he is called *the only wiſe God* (1 Tim: 1. 17.) The wiſdome of men and Angels is folly to his. God is great alſo in his goodnes, ſo great that Chriſt himſelfe as man would not be called *good*, but told him that called him ſo by way of rebuke, *There is none good but one, that is God* (Math: 19. 17.) Holy *David* brake out into the admiration of that goodneſs which God hath layd up, yea of that which he dayly worketh for man. How much more did he and ought we to admire that goodneſs which is not ſo much in himſelfe as himſelfe? (*Pſal:* 31. 19.) *O how great is thy goodneſſe, which thou haſt layd up for them that feare thee, which thou worke*ſt

*worke*ſt *for them that truſt upon thee before the ſons of men*. The goodneſſe which God acts and puts forth for the creature, is a great goodneſſe (*Iſa:* 63. 7. *Neh:* 9. 25.) but that goodneſſe which is the goodneſſe of his nature, is a goodneſſe as great as God is, a goodneſſe infinite in greatneſſe. Againe, how often is God called great, yea admired for his greatneſſe *in mercy*? When *David* (2 Sam: 24. 14.) made choyce to fall into the hands of God; he gave this reaſon of it, *For his mercies are great*. He is alſo great in wrath; we read (2 *Kings* 23. 26.) of *the fierceneſſe of his great wrath*. And how great is his Love? Firſt, in redeeming us by Chriſt (*Joh:* 3. 16.) *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son*, &c. God loved us ſo much in that gift, that no man could ever tell how much love he hath given us in it. Secondly, His love is great in quickning us with Chriſt (*Eph:* 2. 4.) *God who is rich in mercy, for the great Love wherewith he hath loved us, even when we were dead in ſins, hath quickned us together with Chriſt*. His love both in redeeming and quickning us is ſo great, that while we are called to the greateſt ſtudy after the knowledge of, we are told we cannot know the greatneſſe of it, (*Eph:* 3. 18.) *That you may know the Love of God which paſſeth knowledge*. I will not ſtay upon this Attribute, the Greatneſſe of God, onely take theſe five briefe inferences from it; *God is Great*. Then

First, *God can doe great things, the greateſt things, for us; every thing is in working as it is in being*; they that are but little, can doe but little; God being great in his being, that is, in his power, in his wiſdome, in his goodneſſe, in his mercy, how eaſily can he doe great things! The Scripture is abundant in ſhewing forth the great things which God hath done, and will doe, 2 *Sam:* 7. 22, 23. *Job* 5. 9. *Pſal:* 71. 19. *Pſal:* 86. 10. *Pſal:* 92. 5. *Pſal:* 111. 2. *Pſal:* 126. 2, 3. *Pſal:* 136. 7, 17. *Joel* 2. 21. The workes of God in all ages and in all places, have borne the ſtamp of and given teſtimony to his excellent Greatneſſe. We ſay, *There is nothing great to a great mind, or to a man of a great ſpirit*. A Great ſpirited man will overcome not only great difficulties, but ſeeming impoſſibilities, yea he is glad to meete with greateſt difficulties, becauſe they match the greatneſſe of his mind. Then certainly the Great God, doth nothing but great, and can doe the greateſt things. 'Tis no matter how great the things are which

we have need to be done for us, if we can but intereſt the Great God in the doing of them. God can doe great things in wayes of mercy for his people, and he can doe great things in wayes of Judgement againſt his enemies. Though his enemies be Great Oakes and Cedars, he can hew them downe (*Amos* 2.9.) Though his enemies be as great as the greateſt mountaines, he can remove and level them; *Who art thou O great mountaine before Zorobabell, thou ſhalt become a plaine* (Zech: 4.7.) that is, the great power of God, with *Zorobabell*, can overthrow or overturne thoſe powers which oppoſe or ſtand in the way of his Church and people, though they appeare as inſeparable and immoveable as a Great Mountaine.

Secondly, If *God be Great*, then he can pardon great tranſgreſſions; you that are great ſinners feare not. Were not God a great God, the leaſt of our ſins could not be pardoned; were not he great in mercy, and great in goodneſſe, our hearts would fayle us, yea our faith could have no bottome to come to him for the pardon of our great ſins; But why ſhould great ſins diſcourage us to aske their pardon of God, who is great in mercy? *David* made the greatneſſe of his ſin his argument to move the Lord to pardon it (*Pſal:* 25.11.) *Pardon my ſin for it is great*; who could ſpeak thus, unleſſe he had that upon his heart that he ſpake to the great God, who is greater in nothing, and hath magnified his greatneſſe in nothing more then in acts of mercy to Greateſt ſinners?

Thirdly, If God be a great God; then he muſt have great ſervices and duties; He muſt have great praiſe (*Pſal:* 48.1.) *great is the Lord and greatly to be praiſed*; he muſt have great love, we muſt love him even with all our heart, and with all our might. He muſt have great feare (*Pſal:* 89.7.) Great faith (*Math:* 15. 28.) Great honour from all his people. When *David* was about to make great preparations for the building of the Temple, he ſaith (1 *Chron:* 29.11.) *Thine O Lord is greatneſſe, and the power, and the glory*, &c. And when *Solomon* was about to build the Temple, he ſaith (2 *Chron:* 2.5.) *The houſe which I build is great, for great is our God above all Gods.* We ſee *David* prepared and *Solomon* builded in proportion to the God for whom the one prepared and the other built a houſe. Thus I may ſay of all you doe for God or to God, let it be the greateſt your ſtocke and ability can

can reach to, becauſe he is a great God. The Lord himſelfe uſeth that argument by the Prophet to urge his people to doe their utmoſt in whatſoever they were called to doe (*Mal:* 1.14.) *Curſed be the deceiver which hath a male in his flocke, and voweth and ſacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing*; (that is, who when he is able to performe a greater ſervice to the Lord, puts him off with a leſſer one) *for I am a great King, ſaith the Lord of hoſts*, &c. Therefore take heed of putting me off with weake female ſervices, I expect a male, your beſt, that ſervice which is moſt ſpirituall and maſculine.

Fourthly, If God be great, then, they who are but little themſelves, having an intereſt in God, may doe great things too. The leaſt creature having an intereſt in the great God, is as great, yea infinitely greater then the greateſt in the world, who ſtand in their owne ſtrength. *Moſes* ſaith (*Deut:* 4.38. *Deut:* 7.1.) that the preſence of God with *Iſrael* was ſuch, that by it they overcame Nations, greater and mightier then they; their littleneſſe did not hinder them, becauſe the great God was with them in their workes and wayes; yea God loves to uſe ſmall inſtruments, that his owne greatneſſe who is the efficient may appeare. That queſtion which was twice put in the Prophet (*Amos* 7.2, 5.) is very often put in that caſe; *By whom ſhall Jacob ariſe? for he is ſmall.* That which made it ſo queſtionable whether *Jacob* ſhould riſe, was his ſmallneſs; And could we remember the Greatneſs of the God of *Jacob*, we ſhould either never make ſuch queſtions, or eaſily anſwer them.

Fifthly, Seeing God is great, we ſhould be alwayes aſcribing greatneſſe to God, we ſhould lift him up in his greatneſſe. Thus *Moſes* exhorted others (*Deut:* 32.3.) *Becauſe I will publiſh the name of the Lord, aſcribe ye greatneſſe to our God.* And *David* at once prophecieth the ſame of others, and promiſeth it for himſelfe (*Pſal:* 145.6.) *Men ſhall ſpeake of the might of thy terrible Acts, and I will declare thy greatneſſe.*

Againe, Conſider theſe words as they are expreſſed comparatively, *God is greater then man*; As God is great, ſo greater then the greateſt men. God is great above all Gods; that is, above all the Kings and Princes of the earth. *Now I know* (ſayd *Jethro*, *Exod:* 18.11.) *that God is greater then all Gods* (greater then *Pharoah* and his *Egyptian* Princes) *for in the thing wherein they dealt*

dealt proudly he was above them. *David* challenged all the Gods on Gods behalfe (*Psal:* 77.13.) *Who is so great a God as our God?* Let any man name him if he can; He is a God above all Gods, that is, above the greatest powers in this world who are called Gods. Thus Christ comforts believers with an assurance of safety for ever (*John* 10. 29.) *My father is greater then all*, then the devill and all.

But some may say, who knoweth not this that God is Great, or that he is greater then men or devills? *Job* himselfe spake much of this subject, yea his friends made it their businesse to exalt the greatnesse of God, as we may see in severall passages of this Booke. So that *Elihu* seemeth to say no more here, then had been sayd already, and doth no more then hath been done already. Is not this then a cold way of arguing to tell *Job* that which he knew already?

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we have need to be done for us, if we can but intereſt the Great God in the doing of them. God can doe great things in wayes of mercy for his people, and he can doe great things in wayes of Judgement againſt his enemies. Though his enemies be Great Oakes and Cedars, he can hew them downe (*Amos* 2.9.) Though his enemies be as great as the greateſt mountaines, he can remove and level them; *Who art thou, O great mountaine before Zorobabell, thou ſhalt become a plaine* (Zech: 4.7.) that is, the great power of God, with *Zorobabell*, can overthrow or overturne thoſe powers which oppoſe or ſtand in the way of his Church and people, though they appeare as inſeparable and immoveable as a Great Mountaine.

Secondly, If *God be Great*, then he can pardon great tranſgreſſions; you that are great ſinners feare not. Were not God a great God, the leaſt of our ſins could not be pardoned; were not he great in mercy, and great in goodneſſe, our hearts would fayle us, yea our faith could have no bottome to come to him for the pardon of our great ſins; But why ſhould great ſins diſcourage us to aske their pardon of God, who is great in mercy? *David* made the greatneſſe of his ſin his argument to move the Lord to pardon it (*Pſal:* 25.11.) *Pardon my ſin for it is great*; who could ſpeak thus, unleſſe he had that upon his heart that he ſpake to the great God, who is greater in nothing, and hath magnified his greatneſſe in nothing more then in acts of mercy to Greateſt ſinners?

Thirdly, If God be a great God; then he muſt have great ſervices and duties; He muſt have great praiſe (*Pſal:* 48.1.) *great is the Lord and greatly to be praiſed*; he muſt have great love, we muſt love him even with all our heart, and with all our might. He muſt have great feare (*Pſal:* 89.7.) Great faith (*Math:* 15. 28.) Great honour from all his people. When *David* was about to make great preparations for the building of the Temple, he ſaith (1 *Chron:* 29.11.) *Thine O Lord is greatneſſe, and the power, and the glory*, &c. And when *Solomon* was about to build the Temple, he ſaith (2 *Chron:* 2.5.) *The houſe which I build is great, for great is our God above all Gods.* We ſee *David* prepared and *Solomon* builded in proportion to the God for whom the one prepared and the other built a houſe. Thus I may ſay of all you doe for God or to God, let it be the greateſt your ſtocke and ability can

can reach to, becauſe he is a great God. The Lord himſelfe uſeth that argument by the Prophet to urge his people to doe their utmoſt in whatſoever they were called to doe (*Mal:* 1.14.) *Curſed be the deceiver which hath a male in his flocke, and voweth and ſacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing*; (that is, who when he is able to performe a greater ſervice to the Lord, puts him off with a leſſer one) *for I am a great King, ſaith the Lord of hoſts*, &c. Therefore take heed of putting me off with weake female ſervices, I expect a male, your beſt, that ſervice which is moſt ſpirituall and maſculine.

Fourthly, If God be great, then, they who are but little themſelves, having an intereſt in God, may doe great things too. The leaſt creature having an intereſt in the great God, is as great, yea infinitely greater then the greateſt in the world, who ſtand in their owne ſtrength. *Moſes* ſaith (*Deut:* 4.38. *Deut:* 7.1.) that the preſence of God with *Iſrael* was ſuch, that by it they overcame Nations, greater and mightier then they; their littleneſſe did not hinder them, becauſe the great God was with them in their workes and wayes; yea God loves to uſe ſmall inſtruments, that his owne greatneſſe who is the efficient may appeare. That queſtion which was twice put in the Prophet (*Amos* 7.2, 5.) is very often put in that caſe; *By whom ſhall Jacob ariſe? for he is ſmall.* That which made it ſo queſtionable whether *Jacob* ſhould riſe, was his ſmallneſs; And could we remember the Greatneſs of the God of *Jacob*, we ſhould either never make ſuch queſtions, or eaſily anſwer them.

Fifthly, Seeing God is great, we ſhould be alwayes aſcribing greatneſſe to God, we ſhould lift him up in his greatneſſe. Thus *Moſes* exhorted others (*Deut:* 32.3.) *Becauſe I will publiſh the name of the Lord, aſcribe ye greatneſſe to our God.* And *David* at once prophecieth the ſame of others, and promiſeth it for himſelfe (*Pſal:* 145.6.) *Men ſhall ſpeake of the might of thy terrible Acts, and I will declare thy greatneſſe.*

Againe, Conſider theſe words as they are expreſſed comparatively, *God is greater then man*; As God is great, ſo greater then the greateſt men. God is great above all Gods; that is, above all the Kings and Princes of the earth. *Now I know* (ſayd *Jethro*, *Exod:* 18.11.) *that God is greater then all Gods* (greater then *Pharoah* and his *Egyptian* Princes) *for in the thing wherein they dealt*

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that God is righteous, yet when they reſt not in his dealings with them, they imply ſome unrighteouſneſſe in God. Many ſay God is wiſe, only wiſe, yet while they will be their owne carvers, and are unſatisfied with Gods allowances and providences, they make themſelves wiſer then God, or at leaſt imagine things might be ordered with Greater wiſdome then they are. Many ſay God is great in mercy, greater infinitely then man, yet when they ſhould act faith about the pardon of their ſins, they act it as if God had but the mercy of a man, or as if his *thoughts were as our thoughts, and his wayes* (in diſpencing favours) *like our wayes*, and ſo they bring God downe to their owne ſize and ſcantlings. If theſe had been asked the queſtion, whether God hath not greater mercy then man, they would have anſwered, doubtleſſe he hath; and yet they are no more in believing, then if the mercy of God were of the ſame meaſure with the mercies of narrow-hearted man. Thus we modle the Great God, and our Idea's or apprehenſions of him according to what we ſee in our ſelves, not according to what he is and hath ſaid of himſelfe. And what are our righteſt notions of God, but hoverings in the ayre, till we bring them downe into practiſe, or live up to them, till every thing we doe be an expoſition of what we ſpeake and believe of God. And when we believe indeed that God is greater then man, we make our ſelves juſt nothing before God: if we are any thing to our ſelves, or glory in any thing of our owne, be it little or great before God, we do not give God the glory of his greatneſſe. The Lord ſpeaking of his owne greatneſſe by the Prophet, ſaith, *All nations are but as the drop of the bucket to him, yea they are as a little thing, as nothing, leſſe then nothing*; if therefore you make not every thing little, yea nothing before God, you detract from the glory of his greatneſſe. Againe, they only acknowledge God in his greatneſſe, who both agree to all he doth as juſt, and receive it as good, yea as beſt, how bad ſoever it be to nature, or bitter to their ſence. Once more, they only acknowledge God fully in his greatneſſe, who though God changeth and varieth his diſpenſations every day with them, though he empty them never ſo often from veſſell to veſſell, yet ſit downe and ſay, God is unchangeable to them. It is becauſe the Lord changeth not that we are not conſumed (*Mal: 3. 6.*) therefore what changes ſoever his people meete with, his heart and thoughts towards them are not changed.

Secondly,

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The very reaſon why we doe not ſtoop to God in ſilence, why we doe not ſuffer him quietly to doe with us and diſpoſe of us how he will, is, becauſe we doe not lay to heart as we ought the greatneſſe of God.

Did we remember, that the great God is great in goodneſſe, and great in wiſdome, as well as great in power; in a word, did we, when we ſay God is great, and greater then any man, know what we ſay, it would preſently ſtop our mouthes, and for ever ſilence all our diſcontents & complainings, whether in reference to our perſonall or the publick concernments. We may pray that God would remove any affliction or evill that is upon us (to doe is ſo not only our liberty but our duty) but we may not complaine of any affliction, as an evill to us, nor would we ever make ſuch a complaint, if our hearts were taken up with this thought, that God is great in Goodneſſe. Why doe we ſay, at any time, Surely we have ſuffered enough, or too much already? Why doe we demand ſo curiouſly wherefore God ſhould uſe ſuch ſeverity againſt us? What is the reaſon of all this? even this, we doe not conſider enough of his greatneſſe. *All our inward troubles at our outward troubles ariſe from this, becauſe we doe not enough believe or not remember who God is.* We by our ignorance and unbeliefe diveſt God (as much as in us lyeth) of his great goodneſſe and wiſdome, when we feare, eſpecially when we conclude, things are not ordered for our good. And though every man is ready to ſay, he loathes yea trembles at ſuch thoughts, yet we may lodge many ſuch gueſts before we are aware. *Whenſoever we are overgrieved at any affliction, our owne or others, or would* (without much free ſubmiſſion to the will of God) *have things goe otherwiſe then they doe, we, upon the matter, make our ſelves greater and wiſer then God.* And though this be farre from our purpoſe, yet we cannot avoyd the imputation of it. That which is not (as ſome diſtinguiſh) the aime, ſcope, and intendment of the ſpeaker or actor may yet be the aime and ſcope of his action, worke or ſpeech; no doubt *Job* was very farre from the leaſt thought of diminiſhing much more of denying the greatneſſe of God, either in his power, wiſdome, or goodneſſe, yea (as was granted before) he ſpake very highly of him in all theſe his glorious and divine perfections;

Finis operis licet non operantis.

fections. It was not his end when he spake so impatiently and complainingly, to rob God of that honour of his greatnesse, yet *Elihu* did him no wrong when he sayd his impatience and complainings did it. And if any shall be found complaining like *Job*, though they doe not formally deny, that God is greater then man, yet that interpretation and construction may justly be put upon their complaints.

But some may here object and say, how was *Job* such a mirror, such a patterne of patience, as the Apostle *James* makes him (*Chap:* 5. 11.) if he manifested so much impatience as might be interpreted by others, though not intended by him a deniall of the Greatnesse of God?

I answer, though all agree (and the testimony of the Spirit of God is enough to confirme it, though all should not agree) that the patience of *Job* was exceeding great, yet no man may say (nor doth the Spirit of God, in Scripture, say it) that his patience was perfect; his patience was such as exceeded the most, yea (for ought that we know) the best of men, yet his was but the patience of a man, of a man compassed about with the like passions as other men. His patience was sincere and without hypocrisie, but his patience was not compleate nor without infirmity; or his patience (we may say) was perfect as to the kind, but it was not perfect as to the degree. His patience deserved both commendation and imitation; yet he shewed (at times) such impatience as deserved reproofe, and should not be imitated but mortified and avoyded. Good men doe not only act lesse in goodnesse sometimes, but ill and much amisse. And while we see tallest Cedars fayle (they shall not utterly fall, *Job* did not) *Let him that thinketh he standeth* (that is, who hath a strong opinion of his owne strength) *take heed lest he fall*, (as the Apostle cautions him, 1 *Cor:* 10. 12.) for even the impatient complaints of *Job* in his sufferings (like those sufferings of the *Israelites* for their sins spoken of in the former verses of that Chapter) fell from him for an ensample (or type) and are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

Quæ pueris ipsis decantata sunt nobis in gravi lucta & perturbatione

Thus you see the reason why *Elihu* tooke up this common principle, which every Child learnes out of a Catechisme, to convince this holy man with. What was more knowne to *Job*, or to any knowing man, then this, that God is greater then man? yet *Elihu*

Elihu chose this as the most commodious and effectuall argument, to compose his spirit, and quiet him after all his distempered and tumultuating complaints; nor hath *Elihu* yet done arguing downe the hight and unquietnesse of *Job's* spirit. We have him both reproving him for it by way of question, and giving him another unanswerable argument against it, in the next verse.

ut nova quædam proponendi sunt. Mert.

Vers. 13. *Why dost thou strive against him, for he giveth not account of any of his matters?*

The words are a reproving question; As if he had sayd, Thou dost ill, very ill to strive. There is a four-fold striving, three of which are held forth in Scripture under the word of the text.

First, There is a striving with outward force and power, either personally man with man (properly called *contention*) or more generally, nation with nation, properly called *warre*.

ריב *contendere pertinet ad judicialem & forensem litem ad dei tribunal instituendam & quod sæpe postulavit Job.*

Secondly, There is a legall striving, a striving by way of plea, about matters of right and title. The word in the text chiefly imports such a judiciary striving, a strife in law, when the adverse party or *Plaintiffe* impleads and commenseth his suit against the *Defendant*. Striving is taken in this sence and joyned with warring in the description of that contest which *Jephtah* had with the King of the Children of *Ammon* (Judg: 11. 25.) *And now art thou any thing better then Balak the son of Zippor king of Moab? did he ever strive against Israel? or did he ever fight against them?* That is, did he either make warre with *Israel*, or did he so much as challenge and plead his right to their land by law? That other name which *Joash Gideons* father occasionally gave him (*Judg:* 6. 31, 32.) takes part from this word; *Therefore on that day he called him Jerubbaal, saying, Let Baal plead against him, because he hath throwne downe his a'tar.* As if he had sayd, Let *Baal* come and enter his action against my Son if he please; and let my Son alone to answer him.

Thirdly, There is a logicall striving, or a striving by dint of argument and reason. Thus disputants strive; and Books of controversie about matters of faith and worship are called Bookes of *Polemicall Divinity*. Nor indeed hath any kind of strife been carried on with higher and hoter animosities then those managed by tongue and pen in writing and disputing.

Fourthly, The word is applyed to any angry paſſionate chideing and complaining. Thus 'tis uſed in that famous hiſtory (*Exod:* 17.) where the people of *Iſrael* (having journeyed from *Sin* and pitched in *Rephidim*, v. 1.) *did chide with Moſes:* from which act (v: 7th) *He called the place Maſſa and Meribah, becauſe of the chideing of the children of Iſrael, and becauſe they tempted the Lord, ſaying, Is the Lord among us or not?* Becauſe the people of *Iſrael* ſtrove with *Moſes*, or rather with God himſelfe, Therefore to keepe them under the fence of this ſin and provocation, *Moſes* called the name of the place *Meribah*, which ſignifieth *Striving*. In this laſt ſence, as ſtriving is uſed by way of chideing and complaining we are to underſtand it here. *Why doſt thou ſtrive againſt him?* (ſaith *Elihu*) That is, why doeſt thou chide and complaine about the dealings of God with thee? or becauſe he will not render thee a reaſon of his dealings with thee in this affliction. *Job* made many ſtriving and chideing complaints, his firſt were eminently ſuch (*Chap:* 3. 11.) *Why dyed I not from the womb? why did I not give up the ghoſt when I came out of the belly? why did the knees prevent me, or why the breaſts, that I ſhould ſucke?* He chideth hard about the hardneſſe of his condition in this life, who chideth becauſe he liveth. Read him in the ſame language (*Chap:* 10.18.) and in a language not much unlike it in ſeverall other places. Yea *Job* doth (I ſay not formally yet vertually) call out or challenge God more then once to plead with him, and make good his cauſe againſt him. *Why doſt thou ſtrive with him?*

For he giveth no account of any of his matters.

ענה The word ſignifieth properly *to anſwer*, and ſo the text might well enough be rendred here out of the originall, *he anſwereth not.* Mr *Broughton* ſaith, *He will not ſpeake for all his dealings.* If If any man demand of God a reaſon of his doings, he may chuſe whether he will give it him or no: He will not be brought to a reckoning: *He will not, he needeth not to anſwer*, or give an account

Of any of his matters, or, *of any of his words.*

כל דבר יו 'Tis frequent in the Hebrew to expreſſe matters or things, by this word, which in ſtrictneſs ſignifieth but *a word.* (Chap: 19. 28.) *Seeing the root of the matter* (the text is the root of the word)

word) *is found in me.* So here, *He giveth not account of any of his words or matters.* Againe, The originall ſaith, *He giveth not account of all his matters.* We tranſlate full and right to the ſence, when we ſay, *He giveth not account of any of his matters.* For the meaning of *Elihu* is not that God giveth an account of ſome (though that be a truth) but not indeed of all his matters, he hath ſome reſerved caſes and counſels, but his meaning is, that he is not oblidg'd to give any man an account of ſo much as of any of his matters. And then, that univerſall is to be taken diſtributively, *All for any.* So we render it (*Pſal:* 147. 20.) where the Pſalmiſt ſhewing the ſpeciall priviledges of Gods people, ſaith, *He hath not dealt ſo with all nations*; We tranſlate more emphatically, *He hath not dealt ſo with any nation.* God was ſo far from giving the ſame priviledge to all nations, which he gave to his *Iſrael*, that he gave not the ſame to any nation. As if he had ſayd, *God hath honoured his peculiar people with peculiar favours, goe enquire and ſearch all the nations of the world, and ye ſhall not picke out a people upon whom God hath beſtowed ſuch rich and precious mercies, as he hath upon his Iſrael.* And to this day the *Iſrael* of God in every nation enjoy ſuch ſpirituall priviledges and mercies as the Nations with whom they are civilly mingled know not of. But, to the poynt; Thus here, *He giveth not account of all*; that is, *not of any of his matters.* לכל גוי

Moſt of the Greeke tranſlaters render (according to the ſtrictneſſe of the letter) not matters but words: *Why doſt thou ſtrive with him? for his words are ſuch as to which none can anſwer.* As if the meaning of *Elihu* were; when God ſpeakes, no man is able to reply upon him, or contradict him. *His ſayings are indeed irrefragable.* Thus they gloſſe their tranſlation; *Why doſt thou call him into Judgement, or ſtrive with him? for all his ſpeeches are ſuch as cannot be contradicted.* If God oppoſe, who can anſwer, and if God anſwer, who can oppoſe him? That's a good ſence, though not a good tranſlation. Theod: *Græci in prima perſona* דברי *verbis meis, & non in tertia ut nos legimus* דבכו *verbis ſuis; quaſi Elihu mimicè verba Jobi referat, cur cum eo auſus es contendere dicens,*

Some others interpret the latter part of the verſe as containing *Job's* anſwer to the queſtion put by *Elihu* in the firſt part of it; *Why doſt thou ſtrive with God?* (ſaith *Elihu*) To which *Job* is ſuppoſed, replying, *Becauſe he gives me not an account of my matters*; God doth not anſwer to my words, and therefore pardon me if I complaine or ſtrive with him: I hope while I am thus unanſwered you

quia omnibus verbis meis non reſpondet, &c. Bold:

you will hold me excuſed if I move againe and againe, yea, even ſtrive for an anſwer. But the Grammar of the text is againſt this reading, the words being plainly in the third perſon, *his matters*, not in the firſt, *my matters*; and 'tis too great a boldneſſe with the text, to make ſuch a change in the tranſlation. Beſides 'tis more agreeable to the ſcope of the place, to take the latter part of the verſe as a reaſon given by *Elihu*, why *Job* ſhould not ſtrive with God, then to take it as a reaſon given by *Job* why he did.

Quare adverſus eum litigas quod de omnibus rebus ſuis non reſpondeat. Jun:

I find a learned tranſlater among the Modernes, who taking the latter part of the verſe as a reaſon given by *Job* of his ſtriving with God ſpoken of in the firſt, yet keepes to the third perſon; *Why doſt thou ſtrive with him? Becauſe he will not give an anſwer (or an account) of all his matters.* As if *Elihu* had ſayd, *I plainly perceive the cauſe why thou (O Job) art ſo unquiet, and ſtill perſiſteſt ſtriving with God, 'Tis even becauſe he doth not anſwer thy ſo often repeated deſire, to ſummon thy appearance before him, and then to give thee an account of his proceedings with thee. But conſider, man? art thou well in thy wits? knoweſt thou what thou doſt, or ſayeſt? wilt thou a poore narrow-hearted creature take it ill at the hands of the great God, and as it were ſtrive with him, becauſe he doth not render a reaſon of all his matters, and expound all his doings unto thee?* The argument may be formed thus.

He is not juſt or right who ſtriveth with God, becauſe God doth not give him a reaſon of all his actions and adminiſtrations.

But thou ſeemeſt to ſtrive with God, becauſe he hath not given thee an account or reaſon of his adminiſtrations towards thee; therefore thou art not juſt.

This is a faire and proper ſence; yet I ſhall keepe to our reading, and make this latter part of the verſe, as a ground or reaſon given by *Elihu* why *Job* ought not to ſtrive with God, as thoſe two other readings make it a reaſon why he did; As if *Elihu* had ſayd, *Why doſt thou ſtrive againſt him?* Conſider as *God is greater then man*, ſo he is abſolute in his greatneſſe, or his is a ſoveraigne Greatneſſe.

For he giveth not account of any of his matters.

This I conceive the beſt and cleareſt rendring of theſe words, which thus underſtood yeilds us ſeverall uſefull obſervations: Firſt, upon the whole matter, thus:

Gracious

Gracious men doe not always hold out the ſame gracious frame of ſpirit.

There was a time when *Job* was far from ſtriving with God, far from doing or ſpeaking any thing which had the leaſt ſhadow or ſavour of it. Time was, when *Job* was altogether for, and in ſubmitting to God; Let God doe what he will with him, he had not a word to ſay againſt him. After all the ſad reports and meſſages which were brought to him of the devaſtation of his whole eſtate in the field, yea of the diſaſterous death of all his children in one day, and at once; did *Job* ſtrive with God? did he utter one word of complaint, or ſo much as of any diſſatisfaction? No, not one, but gave Glory by this confeſſion; *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken, bleſſed be the name of the Lord.* Was not here a cleare yeilding of himſelfe up to God, to doe what he would with him? Did he not freely lay himſelfe low, when God had layed him at the loweſt? who ever heard or read of a more perfect worke of patience in a meere mortall man? Yet in the proceſs of the buſineſs, *Job* did not only ſpeak ſuch words as carried a ſhadow of ſtriving with God, but were reall ſtrivings and uncomely pleadings with him. His heart did not retaine that firſt ſweet ſubmiſſive frame throughout the affliction, which appeared to admiration at the beginning of it. The ſtate of grace abideth always, 'tis not (as ſome affirme) loſeable; 'tis not, like the beſt things of this world perithing. But though a ſtate of Grace abideth always, yet every mans grace (if any mans) doth not always abide in the ſame ſtate. A true frame of grace ſhall never be deſtroyed, but the heart of a gracious man doth not always continue in the ſame frame. The heate of grace may be cooled, the hight of it abated, the ſtrength of it weakned, and the beauty of it faded. He that a while agoe walked and acted very humbly, may upon another temptation act very proudly, and walke as if he were above all his brethren. He that one while hath acted very ſelf-denyingly, may at another time act very ſelf-ſeekingly. He that hath acted very lovingly, (the very law of love being ſtamped upon his words and workes) may at another time act very unlovely and loveleſly, and doe things which are very much beſide and below, yea contrary to the fulfilling of that royall Law; He may be ſo far from bearing his brothers burden,

(which

(which is the fulfilling of that law of Chriſt, *Gal: 6. 2.*) that he may be a burden to his brother. And while at one time you might have done and ſpoken almoſt what you would to him, and he could beare it, at another time, doe what you can, or ſpeake what you can, he is offended. Such changes and varieties are found upon the moſt gracious frames of ſpirit, which the beſt of Saints have in this world: We have only this to hold to, the ſtate of grace is unchangeable, and we are waiting for ſuch a frame of grace as ſhall never change. That gracious frame in which the hand of God will ſet us up in the day of our reſurrection to glory, ſhall never change, nor decline a haires breadth to all eternity. We ſhall be as pure, and as holy, and as ſpirituall, and as heavenly, and as meeke, and as full of the praiſe of God for ever, as ever. As full to eternity as in the very firſt moment in which that glorious frame ſhall be ſet up. But in this life to how great a degree of grace ſoever we attaine, we ſeldome retaine the ſame degree, but are flowing and ebbing like the water, waxing and waining like the Moone. *Job* was found ſtriving with God, who a little before had ſo humbly ſubmitted and was ſo fully reſigned unto him.

Secondly, Obſerve.

There is a ſpirit in man very apt to ſtrive with God.

Doe ye thinke (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Jam: 4. 5.)* that the Scripture ſaith in vaine, *The ſpirit that dwelleth in us, luſteth to envie*, or (as the margin hath it) *enviouſly*; ſurely no; the Scripture doth not ſpeake this in vaine, and if any thinke it doth, their thoughts are vaine. Now, as there are luſtings in men to envie againſt their brethren, becauſe of the gifts and good things of God which they enjoy; ſo there are luſtings in men to diſcontent againſt God, becauſe of the evills which themſelves ſuffer. When God ſeemes to contend with us, we really fall to contending with God. The waters of *Meribah* will be an everlaſting wineſs of this; of which *Moſes* ſayd (*Numb:* 20. 13.) *This is the water of Meribah, becauſe the children of Iſrael ſtrove with the Lord, and he was ſanctified in them.* The Apoſtle doth more then intimate this readineſs of man to ſtrive with God, while by a vehement expoſtulation he checks it, and reproves all men for it. (*1 Cor:* 10. 22.) *Doe we provoke the Lord to jealouſie? are we ſtronger then he?* They preſume much upon their ſtrength, who are forward to ſtrive, they eſpecially who provoke and challenge others to ſtrive with them. There is a ſpirit in man which ſtouts it with God, even to a provocation of ſtrife with him.

But you will ſay, When may we be ſayd to ſtrive with God? I anſwer, we doe it theſe foure wayes.

Firſt, Man ſtriveth with God by diſobeying his commands; that's a ſtrife with his holineſs. The lawes of God beare the image or ſtampe of his holineſs. All diſobedience is an unanſwerableneſs to the Law, wilfull diſobedience is a making voyd the Law. He that is reſolved to ſin, witheth there were no Law to ſtop him from ſinning, or to puniſh him when he hath ſinned. What greater ſtrife can be raiſed againſt the Law-giver, then to wiſh he had given no ſuch Law?

Secondly, Men ſtrive with God, by not believing or diſtruſting his promiſes. That's a ſtriſe with his faithfulneſs, or with his power. Unbeliefe is one of the worſt wayes, if not the worſt of all the wayes of ſtriving with God. The reaſon why that place at the rock in *Horeb* was called *Meribah* (Exod: 17. 7.) was becauſe the people did not believe. They thought they muſt dye with thirſt in the wilderneſs when they ſaw no water. They fell to this ſin againe a ſecond time upon the like occaſion, while they abode in *Kadeſh* (Numb: 20. 1, 2, 3.) And as the people ſtrove there with God by their rebellious unbeliefe, ſo alſo did *Moſes* and *Aaron* by their unbeliefe, that God would give water to ſuch rebells, as it follows in the ſame Chapter (*v.* 10, 11, 12.) There is no ſin ſo often, or ſo properly called a provocation as unbeliefe is. Yea by unbeliefe we ſtrive ſo much with God, that we are ſayd to weary him (*Iſa:* 7. 13.) O how doe they weary God, who either thinke him ſo weake that he cannot, or ſo unfaithfull that he will not make good his word, or performe his promiſes! The firſt of theſe is alwayes in unbeliefe, the latter often.

Thirdly, We ſtrive with God by not bearing his hand, or by our impatience under the croſs which his hand layeth upon us: while we quarrell with the rod, we quarrell with God who chaſteneth us with it. This was the moſt ſpeciall way in which *Job* ſtrove with God; and the ſinfulneſs of it, hath been ſeverall times toucht upon in this booke.

Fourthly, any murmuring word about, yea any diſcõtented thought with our owne condition, though not vented by words, though it be kept in, and lye cloſe in the boſome, is a ſtriving with God. And ſo likewiſe is any tumultuating thought about his providences towards others, and his ſtating of affaires in the world.

Now as there is ſuch a ſinfull principle in man to ſtrive with God; ſo conſidering, as hath been ſhewed, how many wayes it workes (and many more wayes of its working might be ſhewed, this, I ſay, being conſidered) we may be found ſtriving with God before we thinke of it, yea while we oppoſe the very thought of it. Therefore (as *Gamaliel* warned the *Jewes*, ſaying (*Acts* 5. 39.) *Take heed what ye doe, leſt haply ye be found even to fight againſt God*; Thoſe *Jewes* did not thinke their oppoſing the Meſſengers and Miniſters of Chriſt, was a fighting againſt God; But *Gamaliel* told them plainely it was. So in many other caſes, we may do & ſay that which brings us under the ſame charge of ſtriving with or againſt God, though we have no purpoſe (as *Job* had not) to ſtrive with him.

Againe, As this text ſheweth us *Job* ſtriving with God, ſo it ſheweth us *Elihu* ſtriving with or queſtioning *Job* about it. This queſtion or expoſtulation, *Why doſt thou ſtrive with him?* was a chideing ſevere reproofe of him for doing ſo.

Hence note.

For man to ſtrive with God is moſt uncomely.

Doth it ſuite the condition, or become the ſtate of man to doe ſo? it doth not become man as a creature to ſtrive with God, much leſſe as a new creature, as a profeſſed ſervant of God, as a Saint, as a Chriſtian. We never act ſo unlike either creatures, or new creatures, Saints, and Chriſtians, as when we ſtrive with God. 'Tis a ſhame for a childe to ſtrive with his father, or for a ſervant to ſtrive with his Maſter, how much more for a creature to ſtrive with his Creator, man with God?

Fourthly, The rebuke which *Elihu* gave *Job*, did not only import the uncomelineſſe of his ſtriving with God, but the ſinfulneſſe of it.

Hence note.

To ſtrive with God (in any of thoſe wayes before deſcribed) is a ſin exceeding ſinfull.

How

How extreamly ſinfull it is for man to ſtrive with God, appeares by all the relative duties of man to God: Every ſervant and ſon of God, is bound, firſt, to ſubmit to God; is it not exceeding ſinfull to ſtrive where we ought to ſubmit? Secondly, Every godly man by theſe relations to God, is bound to be content with (which is more then barely to ſubmit to) all his dealings; Doe not they ſin, who in ſtead of being content, ſtrive with God becauſe he deales ſo with them? Thirdly, Man ought, not only to be content, but to be well-pleaſed with what God doth; How farre are they departed from a well-pleaſednеſſe with God, who ſtrive againſt him, which is an act of high diſpleaſure? It is ſayd of *David* (2 Sam: 3. 36.) *Whatſoever the King did pleaſed all the people.* The people did not ſay to *David* their King, doe what you will, we will be pleaſed with it; But *David* was ſo gracious a Prince, ſo good a King, that he did nothing that was juſtly diſpleaſing to the people. 'Tis more then comes to the ſhare of a man, though a King to ſay, Let him doe what he will, we will be pleaſed with it, but 'tis certainly our duty to ſay to God, Doe what you will, doe your pleaſure with us, and to us, we will (through grace) be pleaſed with it. Is it not very ſinfull to ſtrive with him about any thing he doth, in and with all whoſe doings we ought to acquieſſe, and be well pleaſed?

Fifthly, Theſe words, *Why doſt thou ſtrive with him?* import a high preſumption in thoſe who doe ſo.

Hence obſerve.

Striving with God is a preſumptuous ſin.

The Prophet ſaith, (*Iſa:* 45. 9.) *Woe unto him that ſtriveth with his maker. Let the potſherd ſtrive with the potſherds of the earth: Shall the clay ſay to him that faſhioneth it, what makeſt thou? or thy work, he hath no hands?* When the Prophet ſaith, *Let the potſherd ſtrive with the potſherds of the earth*; his meaning is, let man ſtrive with man, but let not any man preſume to ſtrive with his maker; for then the potſherd ſtriveth with the potter. In all which he doth not encourage man to ſtrive with man, (though his match) but ſheweth how inſufferable a boldneſs it is for any man (how matchleſſe ſoever among men) to ſtrive with God. The King of *Judah* having ſent a challenge to the King of *Iſrael*, He returned this anſwer (2 *Kings* 14. 9.) *The thiſtle*

that was in Lebanon sent to the Cedar that was in Lebanon, &c. As if he had sayd, What a presumption is it for a thistle to equall it selfe with a Cedar? and therefore he adviseth (*v.* 10.) *Thou hast indeed smitten Edom, and thy heart hath lifted thee up: glory of this and tarry at home; for why shouldest thou meddle to thy hurt, that thou shouldest fall, thou and Judah with thee?* As if he had sayd, thou canst get nothing by medling with me but blowes, and most probably, thine owne ruine to boote. Now if an earthly King shall look upon it as a presumption for another King his equall in dignity to contend with him, how much more may the God of heaven, who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, count it an high presumption for any man, though the greatest King on earth, to strive with him?

Sixthly, We use to say to those who act foolishly, Why doe you thus? And therefore when *Elihu* saith to *Job*, *Why dost thou strive against him?*

We learne.

Striving with God is a foolish and a most irrationall thing.

Sinners are fooles, all sin is folly, irrationallity is stampt upon every sin. Striving with God is a sin so eminently foolish as may carry away the bell, for foolishnesse, from all other sins. I will give you three things, to shew why it must needs be so.

First, We cannot helpe our selves by striving with God. Christ argues the folly of inordinate cares from this ground (*Math.* 6. 27.) *Which of you by taking thought can adde one cubit unto his stature?* It is not mans care, but the presence and blessing of God which encreaseth both the stature of man and his estate. Cares may breake our sleepe, yea breake our hearts, but they cannot fill our purses, nor heighten our persons, either in a naturall or in a civill notion. Is it not then a foolish thing to take inordinate care? is it not greater folly to strive with God? Seeing as by caring you cannot get any of the good things of the world, so by striving with God, you cannot get off any of those evills which he layeth upon you. Secondly, Is it not a very foolish thing to strive with God, seeing we are so farre from helping our selves out of trouble by it, that we doe but increase our trouble, and the more entangle our selves by it? What doe we by strugling but straiten the bonds of our affliction, and get weari-

nesse,

nesse, in stead of expected ease? till we are quiet with God, how can we hope that he should send us quietnesse? Thirdly, It is a foolish thing to strive with God, because by striving with him in reference to any misery that is upon us, we hinder our selves from taking comfort in any remaining mercy. Though God takes away many mercies, yet while life remaineth there is somewhat of mercy remaining. When *Job* was stripped to his skin, yet he had somewhat left, which was a ground of his blessing God. The greatest loosers have somewhat left, they escape at least (as *Job* sayd he did at worst, *Chap.* 19. 20.) *with the skin of their teeth.* But while we strive with God about the mercies we have lost, we loose the comfort of all the mercies we still enjoy. And is it not extreame folly to deprive our selves of what we have by complaining about what we have not? *Why dost thou strive?* Thus much from the emphasis of the former part of the verse, as 'tis put into a chideing or reproving question, *Why dost thou strive against him?* From the latter branch.

He giveth not account of any of his matters.

Observe.

First, *The power and dominion of God is absolute.*

God is not subject to any reckonings with man whatsoever he doth. He that may doe what he will, and can doe nothing but what is right, neither may nor can be brought to any account for what he hath done. He that is unaccountable is absolute in power.

Further, God needs not give man any account, upon these three grounds. First, He oweth no man any thing; He hath received nothing of us, and if a man hath not received, he needeth not account. They that have any trust from men, are to give account. But what hath God received from man? Man receives his all from God. Why then should God give any account?

Secondly, Consider, the Lord hath wronged no man, nor can he. He is infinitely just and righteous in all his wayes; He not only doth just things, but things are just because he doth them. Why should he give an account of any of his matters, who neither doth nor can doe any matter which is unjust. If we knew and were fully assured of a man (in whose hands we have trusted

much)

much) that he were ſo juſt, that he would not (though he had opportunity) deceive us of a farthing, we would never call him to an account. As it is ſayd of thoſe treaſurers in the ſtory of the Kings (2 *Kings* 12. 15.) *They reckoned not with the men into whoſe hand they delivered the money to be beſtowed on workmen, for they dealt faithfully.* An example hardly to be parallel'd in an age by the ſons of men. Many are more deſirous of truſts, then carefull to diſcharge them; They love to have much treaſure paſſe through their hands, that ſome of it may, in paſſage, ſlip into their owne pockets and purſes. Juſtice and faithfulneſs are rare Jewels among men, and therefore it is but need they ſhould have a check upon them, and be called to an account. But the holy God is altogether juſt and faithfull, therefore to what purpoſe ſhould he be called to an account. Let us reſt quiet in this acknowledgement, That he whoſe will is the higheſt reaſon, can doe nothing without reaſon. Man was created under God, and then he returnes to the order of his creation, when he prefers the judgement of God, even when he doth not underſtand it, before his owne.

Homo ſub deo eſt conditus & ad conditionis ordinem redit, quando ſibi æquitatem judicii, etiam quam non intelligit anteponit. Greg. l. 13. Mor. c. 18.

Thirdly, There is no man, no nor Angel, that hath any authority to call God to an account. They that are accountable to others, are under their power, either as being in degree above them, or as having made a compact & covenant with them (though their equalls) to give them an account. But who ſhall call God to an account, who is higher then the higheſt? And though God hath condiſcended to make a covenant with man, and therein given him aſſurance that he will doe him good, yet God hath engaged himſelfe to give us an account how or in what way he makes good or performes his Covenant. Man muſt give an account to God how he hath performed the Articles of the Covenant, not God to man. As man is a fraile dying creature, ſo he is an accountable creature (*Luke* 16. 2.) *Give an account of thy Stewardſhip, for thou mayſt be no longer Steward* (Rom. 14. 12.) *So then every one of us ſhall give an account of himſelfe to God.* God will call every man to a ſtrict account of his receits and expences, what talents of time and opportunities of parts and abilities, of power and Authorities, have been put into his hand, as alſo how he hath husbanded and improved them. We, alas poore creatures, by ſtriving with God, call him (upon the matter) to give us an account of his matters; And in the meane time forget the

the account which we muſt give to him of all our matters. It is our duty and will be our wiſdome to account ſo with our ſelves every day, that we may be ready for our account in that Great and laſt Audit-Day; And as to remember & prepare for our own account in that day, will keepe us from doing or ſaying any thing which may be interpreted a calling of God to an account all our dayes: to that remembrance will make us ſtrive how to improve and be bettered by the afflictions and troubles wherewith we are exerciſed in the world, inſtead of ſtriving with God, becauſe he puts us upon thoſe ſeverer exerciſes; for how we have improved our afflictions will be one part (and that a very conſiderable one) of our account to God in that day.

Laſtly, The two parts of this verſe connected and conſidered together, (*Why doſt thou ſtrive againſt him, for he giveth not account of any of his matters*) The latter being a reaſon of the former, give us this Obſervation.

> *God being abſolute in power we ought to ſit down quietly under all his dealings*: Or thus, *The conſideration of Gods abſolute Sovereignty, that he gives not account of any of his matters, ſhould ſtop all our ſtrivings and pleadings with or againſt God.*

Our ſtrivings againſt God are of two ſorts, or in a double reſpect; They reſpect either our eternall, or our temporall eſtate.

Firſt, With reſpect to our eternall ſtate (for about that we are apt to call God to account.) O what ſtrivings are there in the hearts of men about Gods abſolute ſoveraignty in electing of ſome and rejecting of others. The Apoſtle is much upon it (*Rom.* 9.) where having repreſented the Lord ſpeaking thus by *Moſes* (*verſ.* 15.) *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compaſſion on whom I will have compaſſion*: He preſently prevents an Objection, or the ſtrife of man with God about that ſaying, (*verſ.* 19.) *Thou wilt ſay then, why doth he yet find fault?* (As if men might find fault with God, if he in that caſe ſhould find fault with them?) *for who hath reſiſted his will?* This is mans plea againſt the ſoveraigne will of God. But what ſaith the Lord by the Apoſtle to ſuch a pleader? we have his reproof of him for an anſwer in the next verſe, *Nay but O man, who art thou that replyeſt againſt God? ſhall the thing formed ſay to him that formed*

formed it, why hast thou made me thus? hath not the Potter power over the clay? The Apostle brings in this Argument as to mans eternall state; he must not strive with God about that. He must not say, why doth God find fault with man? *O man, who art thou that dost logick it thus with God?* His absolute power is his reason why he disposeth thus or thus of thee, or any man else. He will give thee no account why it is so, but his own will to have it so. For shame sit downe, stop thy mouth for ever, speak not thus to God. If thou art, as thou canst not deny, a thing formed by God, then say not why hast thou made me thus? And as now thou strivest with God about that which thou canst not understand, so at last (though now thou dost not) thou shalt understand that thou oughtest not to have striven with him about it. And indeed if men have a mind to strive with God, they may find as many occasions for it in the doctrine of his conditionall decrees of foreseene faith, repentance, and persevering obedience, as in his absolute. We shall never want matter of quarrelling with God, till we have learned simply, that is, graciously to submit.

Secondly, This truth should much more quiet our spirits, and stop our strivings in reference to our temporall estate. And that,

First, As wrapt up in common with others. Did we consider the soveraigne power of God in ordering the affairs of Nations and Churches, we would glorifie him in a gracious silence however we see things goe with them. The Scripture urgeth us often to this fixednesse of mind in the midst of all publick revolutions and changes upon this only account. Heare *David*(*Psal.*46.9,10.) *Come behold the works of the Lord,* (What works? ruining works) *what desolation he hath made in the earth.* God made strange work in the World at that time, Those countryes which before were as the Garden of God, became like a desolate Wildernesse; who was able to beare this with patience? Yet the Spirit of God saith in the next words, it must be patiently borne; when God lets men strive and warre with one another to a common confusion, yet no man may strive with God about it; and the reason given why no man may, is only this (which is indeed all the reason in the world) *He is God.* So it follows in the Psalme, *Be still and know that I am God*; As if the Lord had said, not a word, do not strive nor reply, whatever you see, hold your peace; know that I being God I give no account of any of my matters. Thus the Prophet cautions

cautions the whole world (*Zech.* 2. 13.) *Be silent O all flesh before the Lord,* (doe not dispute the doings of God, doe not murmure at them) *for he is raised up out of his holy habitation.* That is, God is going to work (as a man raised out of his bed is) therefore doe not you trouble your selves, nor rise up against him in your words or thoughts what work soever he makes. Like counsell is given (*Psal.* 75. 5.) *Lift not up your horne on high, speak not with a stiffe neck; for promotion cometh neither from the East, nor from the West, nor from the South: But God is the Judge, he putteth down one, and setteth up another.* All great changes proceed from his judgment; take heed of judging the sentence of the great Judge. Remember, *That he whose name alone is Jehovah, is the most high over all the earth.* (Psal. 83. 18.)

Againe, This is as true if we respect the private or personall estate of any man. If God makes a man poor in estate or despised in the World; if he make him sick or weak in body, he must not say unquietly, why doth God thus? If he taketh away our Relations, if he empty our families we must not strive with him. When old *Ely* had received one of the saddest messages that ever was sent man. *It is the Lord* (said he) *let him doe what seemeth him good* (1 Sam. 3. 18.) So *David* (Psal. 39. 9.) *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it* (Psal. 62. 1.) *Truly my soul waiteth patiently upon God.* The word is, *my soul is silent before God.* And (*Psal.* 42. 5.) How doth *David* chide his soul for making a noyse? *Why art thou disquieted O my soul, hope thou in God.*

But you will say, May we not at all strive? what ever God doth in the World, or with us, must we sit downe under it, or rest satisfied in it, and say nothing?

I answer, First, we may and ought to be very sensible of all the dealings of God. But we must not be unquiet under any of them. It is one thing to feele the smart, and another thing to dispute the rod. Some are under a kind of Stoicall stupidity; they doe not strive with God, because they doe not mind what God doth, they are not sensible. Others are stout, sturdy, and proud spirited, they care not for the crosse, they slight and despise rebukes. Thus or upon these grounds not to strive with God is as bad, if not worse then that striving with him which this poynt disswades and disapproves. We may, yea we ought to take notice of every stroak we receive from God.

Secondly, As we ſhould be ſenſible of the hand of God at any time upon us, ſo we may pray for the removing of his hand; 'Tis not a ſinfull but a gracious act, to ſtrive with God by prayer for deliverance out of trouble.

Thirdly, A man under the Rod may uſe means to get it off, and free himſelfe from it, even whiſe he is quiet under it. So then, the quietneſſe of mind in our afflicted condition here intended and preſſed, is oppoſed only, firſt, to fretting and repining. Secondly, to vexing and tumultuating. Thirdly, to diſtracting cares. Fourthly, to deſponding fears. Fifthly, to killing ſorrows. Sixthly, to uncompoſedneſſe of ſpirit for our callings. Seventhly, to hard thoughts of God. Eighthly, to the uſing of any unlawfull meanes to help or reſcue our ſelves out of the hand of evill.

And that we may be preſerved from all theſe ſtrivings againſt God, and unquietneſſe of ſpirit under any of his ſaddeſt and darkeſt diſpenſations, which will certainly run us upon ſome of, if not all thoſe eight moſt dangerous rocks, laſt mentioned, Let me lay down a few conſiderations, why we ſhould not ſtrive with God in ſuch a manner: And preſcribe ſome preſervatives to keep us at the greateſt diſtance from it.

Firſt, Conſider, to ſtrive with God diſhonours God and darkens his glory; for hereby we call his wiſdome and goodneſſe, yea his truth and faithfulneſſe to us in queſtion. What can be done more diſhonourable to God then this? God reſented it as a great diſhonour, that *Moſes* and *Aaron* did not *ſanctifie him* (that is, give glory to his name) *before the children of Iſrael* (Num: 20. 12.) and therefore told them, *Ye ſhall not bring the children of Iſrael into the land which I have given them.* As if he had ſayd, Ye have not honoured me as ye ought in this thing, and therefore I will not honour you in that. But what is it, that *Moſes* and *Aaron* did not ſanctifie God in? it was (ſaith the text) *in not believing.* And what is that (at beſt) but a ſtriving with God, as to the truth of his word and his faithfulneſſe in fulfilling it?

Secondly, Such ſtriving with God hinders the exerciſe of grace, and ſtops the worke of the new creature. He that ſtriveth with God by way of murmuring, can never ſtrive with God by praying and believing.

Thirdly, Such ſtrivings with God are the exerciſings of our luſts and corruptions. Then is the time for anger and diſcontent, or

or any evill affection to come forth and act their part.

Fourthly, Striving with God is an argument that ſin hath much ſtrength in us, and that corruption hath got a mighty hand over us.

Fifthly, Striving with God layeth us open to all the temptations of Satan, to all the fiery darts of the Devill. Our ſhield is gone, when once we ſtrive with God, who is our ſhield in all Satans ſtrivings and aſſaults againſt us; And then we ſtand naked before that armed enemy.

Sixthly, Striving with God, doth at once unfit us for every good duty, and putteth us further off from every deſired mercy.

Seventhly, and laſtly, Striving againſt God, makes man moſt like the Devill, who is the moſt unquiet and diſcontented creature in the world, and is alwayes both ſtriving with God, and fretting at his owne condition. The devill's ſin at firſt was ſtriving with God, and 'tis the ſumme of all his actings and workings againſt man ever ſince. None reſemble the devill more lively then male-contents; and who are they but ſuch as ſtrive and ſtruggle againſt the afflictive providences of God.

Now for the preſerving and keeping of our hearts from this great, this complicated ſin, a ſin containing many ſins in it, and diſpoſing us to all ſin. Lay theſe things to heart.

Firſt, let us conſider our own nothingneſs in compariſon of God. God is all, and what are we? we are nothing, and ſhall we ſtrive with God? ſhall folly ſtrive againſt wiſdome, and weakneſſe againſt ſtrength? When the Prophet would comfort the people of God againſt the ſtrivings of the nations with them, he doth it upon this conſideration (*Iſa:* 40. 17.) *All nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him leſſe then nothing, and vanity; To whom will ye compare him?* And ſurely we may by the ſame argument, much more deterre all men from ſtriving with God. Shall ſingle perſons ſtrive againſt him, to whom not only they, but whole nations are nothing, yea and leſſe then nothing?

Secondly, Doe we find our ſelves under a croſſe, or in a hard condition? remember we have deſerved no better. As we are nothing, ſo we have deſerved nothing. *Jacob* to keepe his ſpirit quiet in a time of great diſtreſſe confeſſed (*Gen:* 32. 10.) *Lord I am unworthy of the leaſt of thy mercies.* As if he had ſayd, I have no reaſon to complaine, or be angry, to fret or vex at this diſ-

penſation, yea though thou ſhouldſt let the cloud of my brothers wrath breake upon me, and ſwallow me up, for what am I? If we conſider we have deſerved no good, we ſhall never ſtrive with God about any evill that befalls us; eſpecially, if we conſider

Thirdly, That we are ill-deſerving, or ſuch as deſerve the greateſt evills. None of us ſuffer but what our owne ſin hath procured, yea ſin might have procured us ſoarer ſufferings. Every ſin hath a croſſe in the belly of it. And ſhall we ſtrive with God becauſe of our croſſes, when our ſins have made them?

Fourthly, Why ſhould we ſtrive with God about theſe things? are they worth the ſtriving with God about? ſurely they are not worth the ſtriving with men about, much leſſe with God. If we were in the beſt outward eſtate that ever any man enjoyed in this world, yet we were not then got a ſtep beyond vanity (*Pſal: 39. 5.*) *Every man in his beſt eſtate is altogether vanity.* Suppoſe God ſhould give you a blank, and bid you ſit downe and write what you would have as to your outward ſtate, and then beſtow it upon you, yet in this beſt eſtate, you and your all are altogether vanity. And will ye ſtrive with God for taking a vaine thing from you? Will you be ſo much diſſatisfied for the taking away or want of that which could not ſatisfie you when you had it, nor can when you have it againe? If a man had all theſe comforts which he ſtrives for, they could not make him happy, why then ſhould he ſtrive becauſe they are removed from him? But as they are vanity, becauſe unable to ſatisfie when we have them, ſo they are vanity, becauſe of our uncertainty to hold them. Yea ſuppoſe we hold them as long as we can have them, it is but a while. And ſhall we ſtrive with God about looſing that which at longeſt we cannot keepe long? To be ſure theſe things are not neceſſary for us: Chriſt ſayd to *Martha*, *There is one thing neceſſary* (Luke 10. 42.) But a worldly comfort of any kind is not the neceſſary thing which Chriſt there intends; And ſhall we ſtrive with God about unneceſſaries?

Fifthly, Know, afflictions are the portion of the people of God in this life. They are the corrections of a father, and there is no ſon but hath his correction, or may have it. And ſhall we ſtrive with God for ſending us our portion, our ſon-like, child-like portion?

Sixthly, I would ſay this to believers, Why will ye ſtrive with

with God about any of your afflictions? they are for your good and benefit. And will ye ſtrive with God, becauſe he is doing you good? let your afflictions be never ſo ſad, never ſo ſore, and to ſence never ſo bad, yet God is doing you good by them; be not angry with your owne good?

Laſtly, Why doe we ſtrive with God under our afflictions; He loveth us as much under affliction, as in a proſperous condition. God is tender to his in their troubles, and ſhall they be harſh to him, when he is ſo tender towards them? A parent that hath but nature, will tender his child moſt when ſick and weak, and will not God? Let us take heed we be not found ſtriving with, or having hard thoughts of God while the bowels of his moſt tender compaſſions are moving towards us.

To ſhut up this whole poynt. As Chriſt when he ſaw his Diſciples in danger to be carried away with the feare of man, ſaith to them (*Luke 12. 4, 5.*) *Be not afraid of them that can kill the body, and after that have no more that they can doe; But I will forewarne you, whom you ſhall feare; feare him, which after he hath killed hath power to caſt into hell, yea I ſay unto you, feare him.* Now, as becauſe men are apt to feare, yea moſtly to feare that which they ſhould not, Chriſt ſheweth them whom to feare. So (as hath been ſhewed) becauſe men are very apt to ſtrive, but they commonly ſtrive with thoſe, and about thoſe things, which they ſhould not. Therefore I will tell you with whom and with what ye ſhould ſtrive. If ye will needs be ſtriving, pray

Firſt, Strive with the ſin in your owne boſomes, ſtrive with your owne luſts and corruptions. One of the great Goſpel duties which we are called to, is to mortifie our earthly members. To ſtrive with all inordinate affections, with pride, with envie, with love of the world, and with uncharitableneſſe to the death, is our duty, if ye will needs ſtrive, ſtrive with theſe.

Secondly, If you will needs be ſtriving, then ſtrive with the ſins of others in a gracious and zealous manner, as *Nehemiah* did, who contended with the Nobles for their prophanation of the Sabbath, and their unlawfull marriages (*Neh: 13. 17. & 25.*) we ſhould ſtrive with one another to hinder that which is evill. *Gideon* broke downe *Baals* altar, he ſtrove with *Baal*, and was therefore ſirnamed *Jerubbaal* (Judg: 6. 32.) So let us ſtrive with the corrupt practices, courſes, and cuſtomes of the times, we live in,

in, not dilly and comply with them as many doe. The Apoſtle ſaith (*Heb:* 12. 4.) *Ye have not yet reſiſted unto blood, ſtriving againſt ſin.* That is, either the ſin of others, or the ſin which others would force you to. Though we ſhould ſtrive againſt our owne ſins eſpecially, yet 'tis good to ſtrive againſt ſin in whomſoever we ſee it.

Thirdly, If you will be ſtriving, then ſtrive with Satan, The Adverſary; *Submit to God, and reſiſt the Devill*, containe the whole duty of man, (*James* 4. 7.) Our buſineſſe is not to ſtrive with God, but to ſubmit to him; And our buſineſſe is not to ſubmit to the Devill, but to ſtrive with him. How doe moſt run a contrary courſe? They reſiſt God, and ſubmit to the Devill. O ſad! Here's a threefold bleſſed ſtrife; Firſt, Strive with the luſts and corruptions of your owne hearts; Secondly, Strive with the ſins of others, and their ſollicitations of you to ſin: Thirdly, Strive with the Devill and his temptations. Doe not ſtrive with God, why ſhould we ſtrive with God at any time, or in any thing, whom at all times, and in all things, we ought to ſerve, honour and obey? So much of this chideing queſtion, in which *Elihu* reproves *Job*, and he had given but too much occaſion for it. *Why doſt thou ſtrive with him, he giveth not account of any of his matters.*

JOB,

JOB. Chap. 33. Verſ. 14.

For God ſpeaketh once, yea, twice, yet man perceiveth it not.

IN this verſe and the context following, *Elihu* begins his ſecond anſwer to *Job*, which is alſo continued to the end of the Chapter. His anſwer is layd downe.

Firſt, In generall at the 14th verſe.

Secondly, In particulars by way of inſtance, from the 15 verſe to the 29th.

Thirdly, He ſummes up or recapitulates the whole of his diſcourſe, in the 29th and 30th verſes.

Fourthly, Concludes, ſeriouſly inviting *Job* to anſwer what he had ſayd, as alſo, what he had yet to ſay, *verſ:* 31, 32, 33.

This 14th verſe hath ſome difficulty in it; And though the croſſe and various thoughts of Interpreters about it have made it more difficult, yet there is one thing wherein all Center and agree; That, *Elihu* in this 14th verſe and ſo forward propounds certaine wayes by which God is pleaſed to reveale and manifeſt himſelfe unto man. Firſt, to humble and bring man to a true ſence of himſelfe; Secondly, to worke in him an acknowledgement of his great goodneſſe and righteouſneſſe in all his dealings with the children of men. For having ſayd at the 13th verſe, *God gives not account of any of his matters*; He is above all reckonings and dayes of Audit (having thus, I ſay, aſſerted the abſolute ſoveraignty of God over man) he adds, to mittigate and allay the ſeeming ſeverity of this aſſertion, That although God be ſo high and great, that he is not at all obliged to give any account of himſelfe or of his wayes to the creature, nor will allow any man to be ſo bold as to ſtrive with him about, or queſtion any of his matters, yet he is pleaſed freely and graciouſly to condeſcend unto man many wayes; and not only once but often, not only often in one way, but by ſeverall wayes to give him cleare intimations what his will is, what he requires of him, and calls unto him for, if man had but will and underſtanding to perceive it; *for he ſpeaketh once, yea, twice, yet man perceiveth it not.* So then, man hath no reaſon to complaine (as *Job* ſometimes had done, and many others

Deus nemini rationem reddere tenetur. Tanto tamen amore nos complectitur ut ſæpius judiciorũ ſuorum rationes aperire dignetur, etſi id non ſemper obſervamus. Lavat:

others in like diſtreſſes doe) that he is in the darke, and doth not perceive the minde of God towards him, why he is ſo afflicted, and why God contendeth with him; for God doth give touches, hints, and admonitions, ſometimes more privately, ſometimes more openly, and if man doth not perceive them, it is his owne fault.

Verſ. 14. *For he ſpeaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not.*

We render the firſt word of this verſe by that cauſall particle, *For*; yet becauſe the text doth not ſtrictly carry a reaſon in it of what was ſayd before, but is rather an explication or an accommodation of it; therefore ſome begin the verſe, not with that cauſall particle *For*, but with an adverb of time, *When*. So Mr *Broughton*, *When the omnipotent ſpeaketh once*, &c. And the reaſon of it is, becauſe we find another adverb of time anſwering this at the 16th verſe, *When God ſpeaketh once or twice, and man perceiveth it not*, &c. *then he openeth the ears of men, and ſealeth their inſtruction*. As if *Elihu* had ſayd; *If ſpeaking will not doe it, ſomewhat elſe ſhall; or when God having ſpoken once or twice, yet findes man unattentive and unſencible, he takes another courſe; then he openeth the ears of men, and ſealeth up their inſtruction. If they underſtand not his meaning by dreams and viſions, he will awaken them to purpoſe*. We ſay,

For God ſpeaketh.

As if here a reaſon were given why God ſhould not be called at all (as being ſo great he ought not) to give man an account of any of his matters, *for he ſpeaketh once or twice*, he is aforehand with man.

For God ſpeaketh.

To ſpeake, in ſtrict ſence, as ſpeaking is the forming up of words by an articulate voyce, is proper to man; yet in Scripture God is ſayd to ſpeake, when or howſoever he maketh knowne his mind to man. Which he alwayes doth in ſuch a way, as is moſt ſuitable to his owne greatneſſe, with reſpect to mans weakneſſe. When God giveth us any intimation of his owne will, and of our duty, of what he will doe for us, or of what he would have us doe, then

then he is ſayd to ſpeake to us. (*Heb:* 1. 1.) *God who at ſundry times and in divers manners ſpake in time paſt unto the fathers by the Prophets, hath in theſe laſt dayes ſpoken to us by his Son*. God ſpake to the old fathers, as at many times, or by many parts, ſo in divers wayes and manners; he delivered his mind unto the people uſually by the Prophets, and to the Prophets in dreames and viſions. The ſpeaking of God was either immediate from himſelfe in thoſe dreames and viſions to the Prophets, or mediate by the Prophets. And though now God doth not ſpeake to us immediately as he did to the Prophets before Chriſt came in the fleſh, and to the Apoſtles after he was come in the fleſh, yet All the Propheticall and Apoſtolicall writings are the ſpeakings of God to us, beſides what he dayly ſpeaketh to us (anſwerable to what is written) both inwardly by the workings of his Spirit, and outwardly by the workes of his providence. *For he ſpeaketh once*, &c.

Dei admonitio vocu et formoum ſæpe loco eſt, etſi non ſemper ipſe et loquatur ut ſæpe veteribus patribus loquiſolebat quocunq; tandem modo admoneat. Mercer.

Hence note.

In what way ſoever God reveales his minde unto man, he ſpeakes unto him.

Every manifeſtation of the will of God to us is a Sermon; what man ſpeaketh to us according to the word of God, is to be received as the word of God. For as God ſpeaketh to us, though not formally, yet expreſſely in the holy Scriptures, which are his word, ſo he ſpeaketh to us vertually, though not expreſſely by his works. And that, Firſt, by his workes of creation; by them God is continually opening and manifeſting himſelfe to man in his wiſdome, power, and goodneſſe. He ſpeaketh to us, Secondly, by his works of providence, whether firſt they be works of mercy (every mercy hath a voyce in it, every bleſſing a ſpeech) or ſecondly, whether they be works of judgement (*Micah* 6. 9.) *The Lords voyce cryeth unto the Citie, and the man of wiſdome ſhall ſee thy name; heare ye the rod, and who hath appointed it*. Sickneſſes and loſſes, the croſſes and troubles that we meet with in the world, cry aloud to us, eſpecially when they make us (as they often doe) cry aloud. *As the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament ſheweth his handy worke, day unto day uttereth ſpeech, and night unto night ſheweth knowledge* (Pſal. 19. 1, 2.) ſo thoſe things that are done and acted night and day, utter the

mind and speak out the heart of God unto man.

For God speaketh once, yea twice.

באחת *in una* בפעם *pro* אחת *in una vice.*

The Hebrew is, *in once*, that is, for one *Turne* or *Time*, or by one meanes or way. The word *once*, hath a threefold signification in Scripture, all which are applyable to the text in hand.

First, *Once*, is as much as surely, certainly, verily, irrevocably. Thus (*Psal:* 89. 35.) *Once have I sworne by my holinesse, that I will not lie unto David*; That is, I have surely sworne, certainly sworne, irrevocably sworne, my word, yea my oath is out, and it is immutable; That which God (in this sence) once saith, it is alwayes sayd, or 'tis sayd for ever; how much more that which he swareth? Thus the Apostle argueth (*Heb:* 6. 17, 18.) *God willing more abundantly* (or more then needed as to him and the truth of the thing in it self) *to shew unto the heires of promise the immutability of his counsel confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lye* (namely, his promise and his oath) *we might have strong consolation*, &c. In like notion we may expound that *once*, which we finde (*Heb:* 9. 27.) *And as it is appointed unto men once to die* (or to dye once) *and after that cometh the judgement.* Some referre, *once*, to *dye*, as if the meaning were, it is appointed unto men to dye once, that is, men must expect to dye a naturall death, which happens but *once*, and *once* (at least equivalently) will and must happen to all men. Others referre the *once* to *appointed* in the sence of this present exposition; *It is appointed once*; that is, God hath certainly and firmly appointed established and decreed this thing, he hath ratified it in heaven, that men must dye; This Statute is irrevocable; The thing is appointed, and there is no reversing or revoking of that appointment. This is a good sence, and sutable enough to the scope of *Elihu*; God speaketh *once*, that is, what he speaketh is a sure and certain word, an infallible word; *the word setled for ever in heaven* (Psal: 119. 89.) his promise is not only sure but most sure. As the Apostle speakes (2 *Pet:* 1. 18, 19.) *And this voyce which came from heaven we heard when we were with him in the holy Mount. We have also a more sure* (the Comparative imports the Superlative, *a most sure*) *word of prophecy, whereunto ye doe well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a darke place, untill the day dawne and the day-starre arise in your hearts.* As the whole propheticall, so the whole historicall and doctrinall word of God is most sure, being once spoken it is spoken for ever, *And written as with a pen of iron, and the point of a Diamond, and that upon a rocke which cannot be removed.* That which was vaine-gloriously, and beyond the line of man, sayd of the Law of the *Medes* and *Persians*, (Dan: 6. 8.) is only true of the word of God, it altereth not.

Secondly, This *once* speaking, notes the speaking of a thing so *sufficiently or fully*, that there is enough sayd at once, and so no more needs be sayd. The vulgar translation takes up this sence, *God hath spoken once* (that is, he hath spoken fully or sufficiently for mans instruction and admonition at once, and therefore he translates the latter part of the verse, thus; *And he doth not repeate it the second time.* That which is done at once sufficiently, needs not be done a second time; This is a truth; There is a sufficiency and a fullnesse in the word of God once spoken, there needs nothing to be added; or as others expound this translation. When once God speakes, that is, resolves and determines a thing, he doth not (as man who often repents of what he hath purposed) bring it into a second consideration, for he cannot erre, and therefore he needs decree but once. But though this be a truth, yet I doe not conceive it to be the meaning of this place, because it doth not well agree with what goes before, and lesse with that which followeth at the 29th verse; *Loe all these things worketh God oftentimes*, or (as our Margin hath it) *twice and thrice with man.* And therefore here *Elihu* rather intimates the variety of those wayes by which God reveales himselfe to man, then the sufficiency of any one of them. For though we grant any one of them sufficient, yet God out of his abundant goodnesse is pleased to reveale himselfe more wayes then one, and more times then once.

Semel loquitur deus, et secundo id ipsum non repetet. Vulg: *Quia quod sufficienter salutare est iterare superfluum est.* Aq:

Thirdly, This *once*, may be taken exclusively; so in Scripture, *once* is *once* and *no more*, *once* and not againe; or as we say, *once for all*, and so it is opposed to the repeating and acting over of the same thing. Thus *Abisha* sayd to *David* (1 Sam: 26. 8.) *God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day, now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the speare, even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time.* Once smiting is there opposed to smiting more then once; As if he had sayd, I will

will pay him home, or diſpatch him at once, there will be no need to fetch another blow. Thus when the Apoſtle had ſayd in the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* (Chap: 9. 27.) *It is appointed unto men once to dye, and after this the judgement*, preſently he addeth, *So Chriſt was once offered to beare the ſins of many*; there alſo *once* is oppoſed to *twice*, or a ſecond time, excluding all repetition of the ſacrifice of Chriſt. As 'tis ſayd (*Heb:* 10. 10.) *By the which will we are ſanctified, through the offering of the body of Jeſus Chriſt once for all.* And therefore the ſame Apoſtle in the ſame Chapter (*v.* 26.) terrifieth Apoſtates with this dreadfull doome; *If we ſin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more ſacrifice for ſins*; that is, neither will Chriſt give up himſelfe to be a ſacrifice againe for ſuch as have (after light received about it, and ſome ſeeming cloſings with it) caſt off that his ſacrifice, nor can any other ſacrifice be given. In this ſence alſo ſometimes God ſpeakes, *once*, He ſpeakes *once* and will ſpeake no more, *once* and not a ſecond time; though we have a *twice* here in the text, yet, I ſay, in ſome caſes and unto ſome perſons, God ſpeaketh once and will not ſpeake againe. Whence take this obſervation or Admonition rather.

It is daungerous refuſing the firſt call, the firſt Word of God. Poſſibly, you may never heare more of him or from him, once may be all.

God may ſpeak in thy caſe, not only *once*, that is firmly and certainly, not only *once* that is ſufficiently, but once (that is excluſively, once) and no more for ever. That moving caution of the Apoſtle is grounded upon ſuch a ſad poſſibillity as this (*Heb.* 3.7.) *Wherefore as the holy Ghoſt ſaith, to day if ye will heare his voyce, harden not your hearts*; and again (*verſ.* 13.) *Exhort one another dayly, while it is called, to day, leſt any of you be hardened through the deceitfullneſſe of ſin.* As if it had been ſaid; heare to day, hear this hour of the day, for you know not, firſt, whether there will be a morrow or another day for you; ſecondly, if you have a morrow, yet you know not whether you ſhall have a word to morrow; both time and ſeaſon, dayes and opportunities are in the hand of God; and he that neglects the ſeaſon of one day, hath no aſſurance of another day, much leſſe of a ſeaſon with the day. Who knows whether the cock ſhall crow twice or no? poſſibly the cock

cock may crow but once; in what a condition had *Peter* been if it had been ſo with him, for after he had (as Chriſt notwithſtanding all his confidence to the contrary, told him (*Mark* 14. 30.) denyed his Maſter thrice, he never called to mind the words of Chriſt, nor had any thought of humbling himſelf for what he had done, till (as 'tis ſaid, *verſ.* 72.) *The ſecond time the Cock crew.* Every one hath not a promiſe (as *Peter* equivalently had) that the cock ſhall crow twice, or that God will afford him meanes a ſecond time to awaken him out of his ſin. That which the Lord ſpake of affliction, to ſhew the fullneſſe of it, may alſo be fullfilled concerning his warnings and admonitions (*Nahum* 1. 9.) *I will make an utter end, affliction ſhall not riſe up the ſecond time*: We ſhould hear at firſt ſpeaking, leſt it ſhould prove that when the Lord hath ſpoken once, he ſhould make an utter end, and ſay, inſtruction and admonition ſhall not riſe up a ſecond time. And to be ſure, as *Abraham* after he had interceded for *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* ſeverall times, ſaid at laſt (*Gen.* 18. 32.) *O let not the Lord be angry, and I will ſpeak yet but this once.* So the Lord when he hath ſpoken oft to ſinners and is not heard growes ſo angry, that he comes at laſt and ſaith, I will ſpeak yet but this once. God will at laſt come to his, *but once* more to all men; and with ſome he is at his once at firſt and no more for ever. There is a time when every man ſhall hear his laſt word, and God will ſpeak but that once; and ſomtimes it is but once in all that God will ſpeak. Therefore take heed, it is dangerous deferrings if God ſpeaks once, if he call & knock once, it is our ſin & folly too, that we doe not hearken to, and open at his firſt call and knock, though the Lord doth (I grant) uſually and moſtly exerciſe much patience towards ſinners, calling and knocking once and againe, as it followeth in the text, *He ſpeaketh once,*

Yea twice, or a ſecond time.

Severall of the Jewiſh writers interpret this *twice* of the two ſorts or wayes of divine revelation which are ſpoken of in the following parts of this context; God ſpeaks to man by viſions and dreams, and God ſpeaks to man by diſeaſes and ſickneſſes, as we ſhall ſee afterward. But I rather take it more generally, not only as to the divers manner and diſtinct wayes of his ſpeaking, but as to the divers times, or reiteration of his ſpeaking; *he ſpeaketh*

once

once, yea twice: As he speaks severall wayes, so severall times, twice or thrice, possibly, in the same way; twice by visions, twice by dreams, twice by sicknesses, and often by his Ministers; *He speaketh once,*

In duabus et sc: vicibus. i.e. bis quod uno verbo dicunt פעמים *aut secundo i. e. iterum semel iterumq; loquitur deus una admonitione non semper contentus.* Drus.

Yea twice.

I shall consider this *twice* three wayes, and give a brief note from each.

First, consider *twice* as to number; twice strictly taken is more then once. One is no number, but two is.

Hence note.

God is so gracious that he speaks once and againe, once and a second time to sinners.

Who is there among us that hath not had experience of Gods speaking to him more then once? And that not only with respect to the various wayes of speaking, but with respect to various times of speaking. He speakes more then once by his word, more then once by his workes, whether of judgment, or of mercy. Some sinners are consumed in a moment or at once, (as it is said of *Corah, Dathan*, and *Abiram* with their confederates (*Numb.* 16.21.) others dye of a lingring consumption. God waiteth to be gracious, and therefore he rarely speaketh his all or striketh his all at once. He gives precept upon precept, line upon line, he sends sorrow upon sorrow, crosse upon crosse, that sinners may at last remember themselves, returne and live.

Secondly, As twice notes a number, so it may be considered as a small number, yea as the smallest number; twice or two is the first number, the first step into number. They that doe a thing more then once cannot do it lesse then twice, nor can that number which is more then one be lesse then two. When the woman in the book of *Kings* told the Prophet (1 *Kings* 17. 12.) *I am going to gather two sticks*. Her meaning was, a very few sticks, only enow to make a little fire to bake a Cake with. And when the Spirit of God would shew how few, comparatively to the rout of the World, they are and will be that bear witnesse to the truths of Jesus Christ, he calleth them two Witnesses (*Rev.* 11. 3.) they are a number, yet expresst by the left number, that we should not have our eyes upon the multitude, or think, that is not the truth

truth which is not followed by great numbers, or the most of the World. The traine of Christ is not large, nor are his wayes throng'd, few there be that find them. As they whom he calls forth to be eminently his witnesses are not many, therefore called *two*; so they that receive their witnesse are not many; *The world wonders after the beast*. Thus as two or twice imply a small number; so in Scripture language, that which is done more then twice is supposed done often or many times (2 *Kings* 6. 10.) When the Prophet had told the King of *Israel* where the forces of the King of *Assyria* would come, and by that meanes defeated him of his purpose; it is said, *And the King of Israel sent unto the place which the man of God told him, and warned him of, and saved himself there, not once, nor twice*; that is, many times, which made the King of *Syria* wonder how it came to passe that he was so often defeated; he thought he had laid his plots so wisely and closely that the King of Israel could not escape, but he saved himself not once, nor twice; more then twice is many, but bare twice is the narrowest compasse of number imaginable.

Hence note.

God hath not given us any ground to presume upon frequent warnings or speakings.

Though he speake more then once, yet it may be but twice, possibly but twice precisely, probably but twice restrainedly taken. The Lord would not have us build upon the hope of future speakings, to the neglect of what is presently spoken. Though God be very patient and long-suffering to sinfull men, yet he hath not given any man, the least occasion, no not by a promise of speaking a second day, to continue one day much lesse to continue long in sin. When God spake (as I may say) at the largest rate of his patience to sinners, he sayd (*Gen.* 6. 3.) *My Spirit shall not always strive with man; not always*, that is, though it strive long, yet it shall not strive very long, and that he may know it, I will give him a day, *yet his dayes shall be an hundred and twenty yeares*. This was somewhat a long day indeed; But remember this hundred and twenty yeares, was all the time that was granted to all the men of that world, there was not so much granted to every particular man of that world, possibly the Spirit of God did not strive a day longer with many a one among them. Therefore take heed

heed of presuming. When the Lord speaketh once, doe not say, I will stay till he speakes a second time, and if he condescend to speake twice, doe not believe that he will alwayes speake.

Thirdly, *Twice*, may be considered as a small certaine number, put for a small uncertaine number. 'Tis frequent in Scripture, to put a certaine number of any kinde, for an uncertaine; Sometimes a certaine great number, for an uncertaine great number; and sometimes a small certaine number, for a small uncertaine number. As twice is not to be tyed up strictly to the smallest number; so not to any number whether small or great.

Hence note.

No man knows how oft he shall be warned or spoken unto by God.

God doth not put an absolute stint upon any of his actions. Beware of neglecting the least twice, the first twice, which is the lowest twice; for though we cannot binde God up strictly to twice, it may prove three times or foure times, yet whether it shall be so many, or how many it shall be, no man nor Angel knoweth. Twice cannot be very often, and 'tis uncertaine how often. Therefore if you hearken not when God hath spoken once (take it strictly) doe not stop your eares at the second speaking. It is sayd, *Moses smote the rock twice* (that was twice beyond his Commission, for he should not have smitten it at all) *and the water came out abundantly*. How many rocks, that is, hard hearts, hath God smitten by his word and his workes twice, and yet we see not the waters of Godly sorrow flowing out; the rocks are smitten more then twice with the rod of God, with the rod of his mouth in the ministery of his word, they are smitten with admonition upon admonition, with reproofe upon reproofe, with threatning upon threatning, and yet the waters came not out abundantly, yea scarce at all. May not they feare that they shall have pœnall sorrow upon sorrow (*Paul* tooke notice of the goodnesse of God to him, that he did not let him have afflictive sorrow upon sorrow (*Phil.* 2. 27.) but, I say, may not they feare they shall have pœnall sorrow upon sorrow) that is, everlasting floods of sorrow, who after the Lords speaking upon speaking, and reproving upon reproving, give no proofe of their godly penitentiall sorrow? O how angry was the Lord with *Solomon*, *because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, which had appeared to*

to him twice (1 Kings 11. 9.) God appeared to him in *Gibeon* (1 *Kings* 3. 5.) when he was first made King, putting him to his choice, or giving him a blanke to aske what he would, and he chose well, he chose wisdome and had it. God appeared to him a second time after the building and dedication of the Temple (1 *Kings* 9. 2.) *And said unto him, I have heard thy prayer, and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me*, &c. Thus the Lord appeared solemnly unto *Solomon* twice, and but twice for any thing that appeares upon record in that solemne manner. Now when notwithstanding these two appearings of the Lord to *Solomon*, the heart of *Solomon* was turned away from the Lord God of *Israel*, *his anger was kindled against Solomon*, and the Lord smote him once, yea twice, renting his kingdome, and pulling away ten tribes at once, from his son and successor. O doe not refuse God speaking to you twice, or the renewed speaking of God; to doe so is very sinfull, and therefore very dangerous. For as 'tis a signe of a holy heart, of a gracious frame of spirit, to heare twice at once speaking; as *David* professed he did (*Psal.* 62. 11.) *God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God: also unto thee O Lord belongeth mercy*. There are severall rendrings and interpretations of those words; But that which to me seemes most intended by our rendring is, I heard what was once spoken twice at once, that is, I heard it speedily, and I heard it believingly; as soon as ever the word came to me I received it, and I received it not only with my eare, but with my heart. That's a blessed way of hearing, and they who heare so, at first speaking, may well be sayd to heare that twice which God speaketh once. But how sad is it that God should speake twice, thrice, yea foure times, and yet not be heard so much as once! When *Job* was brought upon his knees (*Chap.* 40. 5.) he said, *Once have I spoken, but I will not answer: yea twice but I will proceed no further*. *Job* began to be sensible of that which *Elihu* was working him to, that he had been too forward, yea too forward with God; *Job* began to see his error, and recanted it; *I have spoken once, yea twice, but I will proceed no further*. 'Tis good, that after once or twice sinning or failing, we yet say we will proceed no further. O how deplorable is mans condition, when the Lord shall say, I have spoken once, yea twice, but now I will proceed no further, I will speake no more! And this usually comes to passe,

when men are dull and slow of heart to understand what he speaketh, which as naturall men alwayes, so godly men often are, as it followeth in this text; *He speaketh once, yea twice,*

Yet man perceiveth it not.

That is, apprehendeth not sometimes that God is speaking to him, and he seldome understandeth what God is speaking to him.

There is a little varietie in the exposition of this latter clause of the verse; The word *man* not being expressely in the Hebrew (and therefore we finde it put by our translaters in a distinct character) the text runs only thus; *God speaketh once, yea twice, he perceiveth it not.* This hath occasion'd the vulgar latine interpreter to referre this last clause of the verse to God also; giving out the sence thus; *God speaketh once, and a second time he doth not repeate it*; As if here were a warning given, that all should attend the very first motion of Gods voyce to them; *For he speaketh once, and doth not repeate the same.* But I shall not stay upon that, because I see not how the Hebrew word by us rendred *to perceive*, can with any tolerable significancy be rendred to repeate: yet, there is a second rendring of the text in the same tenour, giving a genuine sence of that word, which is very profitable and proper enough to the scope of the place, *God speaketh once, and he doth not consider upon it a second time*; That is, when God speaks or decrees to give forth any thing, he doth not take it into consideration againe or review and bring it about upon second thoughts, as men often doe; yea it is their duty (though it be a duty arising from their frailty) so to doe. Men ought to consider often and review their owne words as well as their works. But (saith *Elihu*, according to this reading) *God speaks once, and doth not consider of it againe*; for he hath the measure and compasse of all things so fully in himselfe, that he needs not turne backe his thoughts upon any of his determinations, as if there could be a mistake, or any error in them. This is a very glorious truth, highly advancing the name of God above every name among the best of the children of men. And it ariseth clearely from the text, leaving out the suppliment which we make of the word *man*. Yet according to the opinion of the most and best expositers, yea according to the clearest scope and tendency of the text, that word

Semel loquitur deus et secundò id ipsum non repetit. Vulg.

ושורבת *a radice intendit oculos prosperit, animadvertit, viderit.*

Semel loquitur deus et secundo illud non considerat. Scult:

word *man* is rather to be supplyed, *God speaketh once, yea twice,*

And man perceiveth it not.

'Tis common in Scripture to leave such words unexpressed, as must necessarily be understood. And therefore I shall only insist upon our owne translation.

Yet before I proceed to that, I shall touch upon another reading of these words, as referring unto man, which doth not so much carry a reproofe of mans dullnesse, as a commendation of Gods goodnesse, thus; *God speaks once, yea twice, if man perceiveth it not.* As if he had sayd, *If man be so weake and darke, so dull and slow of apprehension, as not to perceive Gods minde at his first speaking, yet God is usually so gracious and condescending as to speake twice, or a second time, even to that man.* This reading doth exceedingly exalt and set forth the goodnesse and graciousnesse of God; and we have frequent experience of it, that when God speakes once, and findes creatures dull of hearing, he speakes a second time.

Loquitur deus semel et duabus (vicibus) ad eum qui non consideravit eam. Pisc:

Our reading gives in these words as a charge of mans darknesse and slownesse to apprehend the meaning of God speaking to us either in his word or works. *God speakes once, yea twice,*

Yet man perceiveth it not.

The Hebrew is, *man seeth it not.* There is an eye in the understanding, the mind of man beholdeth the sence of words, even as his bodily eye beholdeth the colours, and dimensions of any materiall object: Yet the eye of mans mind is so bleared and dim-sighted that though God speak once, yea twice, he seeth, he perceiveth it not. That is, he doth not clearly perceive it. *Elihu* makes use of this word six times, *Job* thrice, *Zophar* once, in all which places, they intend an exact observation and through speculation of the matter which they treate upon, either in the affirmative or in the negative; here as a rebuke to man *Elihu* makes use of it in the negative, *man perceiveth it not.*

לא ישור נה *Non viderit illud, sc: homo quod deus loquitur. Verbo hoc* שור *Elihu utitur sexies Job ter Zophar semel; Videtur isto verbo diligens et clara significari speculatio et observatio curiosa.* Coc.

Hence note.

Man of himself cannot perceive the mind of God in spirituall speakings, or God speaking about spirituall things.

The propheticall Sermons are called visions; *The vision of Isaiah*

iah the ſon of Amos, which he ſaw (Iſa. 1. 1.) yet when they preached them to the people, many of them ſaw nothing; their viſions were to the people as parables or darke ſayings. Man in generall falls under a twofold conſideration; firſt, as unconverted or carnall; and in that ſtate he perceiveth not at all, when God ſpeaks once and twice, yea thrice, he perceiveth nothing. And that proceeds from a double ground.

Firſt, from the naturall pravity of his heart, and the blindneſſe of his mind. Of ſuch the Apoſtle ſaith (*Eph.* 4. 18.) *They have their underſtanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, becauſe of the blindneſſe of their heart.* And hence he concludes (1 *Cor.* 2. 14.) *The naturall man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are fooliſhneſſe to him, neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned*; ſpirituall objects muſt have a ſpirituall eye to ſee them.

Secondly, this comes to paſſe ſometimes from the judgment of God upon carnall men; who as in mercy he cauſeth the blind to ſee, ſo in wrath he ſtriketh thoſe that have no mind to ſee with greater blindneſſe, and puniſheth their former rebellion and obſtinacy againſt the word received with an impotency to perceive it. Yea God doth not only leave ſuch in the blindneſſe of their mind and dullneſſe of their underſtanding, but gives them up to it. The Prophet *Iſaiah* was a Goſpel Preacher, he held out the light clearly, yet his hearers were under ſuch a doome, that the very light which he held out blinded them; ſo that the more he ſpake the leſſe they perceived (*Iſa.* 6. 10.) *And he ſaid, go and tell this people, hear ye indeed, but underſtand not; and ſee ye indeed, but perceive not: make the heart of this people fat, and make their eares heavy, and ſhut their eyes; leſt they ſee with their eyes, and hear with their eares, and underſtand with their hearts, and convert, and be healed.* This is a dreadfull Scripture; The Lord is highly provoked indeed, when he judicially ſhuts up the eyes of men, and hardens their hearts againſt his own meſſages, not that he infuſeth any hardneſs or inſtilleth any ignorance into them; but gives them up to that ignorance hardneſſe and darkneſſe which already poſſeſſeth them. And then though God ſpeak once or twice, or a hundred times, they perceive it not: They that harden their hearts, ſhall have them hardened by that which is the ordinary meanes

meanes to ſoften and melt them; and they that ſhut their eyes againſt any truth, are in danger of having them ſhut againſt all truth, even by that means which uſually openeth eyes. Thus we ſee that this firſt ſort of men, meere carnall men, cannot ſee or perceive when God ſpeaketh, and why it is ſo.

Secondly, (which I conceive rather to be the meaning of *Elihu* here) Man may be conſidered in his ſpirituall ſtate. That is, as converted and renewed in ſpirit, by the mighty working of the Spirit. Now to men in this eſtate God ſpeakes once, yea twice, *and they perceive it not.* They that are ſpirituall doe not alwayes perceive ſpirituall things. For

Firſt, they have much corruption in them. Though they are renewed, yet they are renewed but in part; we ſee in part and but darkly, yea ſometimes Saints can hardly ſee at all, eſpecially as to ſome diſpenſations and manifeſtations of God! he may ſpeak once, yea twice and thrice to them in ſuch a thing, or to ſuch a purpoſe, and they take little or no notice of it. He may poynt unto them by ſuch providences, and by ſuch Sermons, and yet they look upon themſelves as un-concerned, not making any home-application of what they outwardly hear or ſee, yea feele and ſmart under; and all this by reaſon of ſome prevailing corruption.

Secondly, this may proceed from their negligence and ſlothfullneſſe; good men are not alwayes carefull as they ſhould, much leſſe critticall and wiſely curious to obſerve every providence of God, and to conſider why or for what end ſuch or ſuch a word is ſent to them. As carnall men thruſt the word from them, ſo godly men faile much at all times, and at ſome times wholly neglect to lay the word to heart. They doe not compare themſelves, that is, their lives and conſciences, their thoughts and wayes with the word, and then no wonder if they perceive not what is ſpoken to them. Even a *Job* may be hindred by his own indulgence from perceiving what God ſaith unto him. The Prophet complained of the people of God for not ſtriving to take hold of him. (Iſa. 64. 7.) *There is none that calleth upon thy name, that ſtirreth up himſelf to take hold on thee.* And may we not complaine that few ſtirre up themſelves either to take hold of the word of God, or that the word may take hold of them? *Paul* exhorted *Timothy* (2 *Tim.* 1. 6.) *to ſtir up the Gift of God that was in him.* They that have received both gifts and grace may be much wanting to themſelves in

in stirring them up. Though we deny mans naturall power, yet persons converted have a spirituall power, which they often neglect to stir up. When the servants of *Benhadad* (*1 Kings* 20. 32,33.) came to *Ahab* upon that message to beg his life, it is said, *The men did diligently observe whether any thing would come from him* that they might take hold of, and urge it in favour of their Master; and as soon as *Ahab* had dropt that word, *he is my Brother*, as soon as they had that word, *they did hastily catch it* and applyed it for their present purpose. So they that are godly should observe what is spoken unto them, what corruption is smitten by the word or by the rod of God, and as soone as ever such a word is spoken, they should take it up and apply it to themselves.

Thirdly, those many lusts that are in the heart of a godly man, not yet fully mortified, as secret pride, self-love, and unbelief, these hinder him from understanding the mind of God. And therefore we are counselled by the Apostle *James* (*Chap.* 1. 21.) *to lay aside* (that is, to get subdued and mortified) *all filthinesse and superfluity of naughtinesse, and* (so) *receive with meeknes the engraffed word which is able to save our souls*. As if he had said, we can neither perceive nor receive the word savingly, unlesse our lusts are cast out and cast off. How much any man neglects this duty of mortifying his lusts, by so much is he rendred both unable to perceive the word, and unfit to profit by it.

Lastly, Mr. *Broughton* renders the words thus, *God speaks once, yea twice, and man will not mark it*. We say, *man perceiveth it not*; he saith, *man will not mark it*. As our reading shews the weakness and imperfections, or the negligence and slothfullnesse of man, when he doth not perceive what God speaketh; so his sheweth the obstinacy of man. The will of man is as perverse, as his understanding is blind. Man hath not only a wound or a weakness in his will unto that which is good, but he hath a rebellion in his will against that which is good, and that not by some occasionall disgust or sudden gust of passion, but he is naturally set and resolved against that which is good. *Man will not mark* what God speaketh in his word and works. Christ upbraids the *Jews* (*Joh.* 5. 40.) *Ye will not come unto me that ye may have life*; he chargeth the fault upon their wills. 'Tis certaine *man hath a will not to come to Christ for life*; yet that is a forced and farre fetcht inference which some make from it, *that man* hath therefore power and *will*

will to come. Sure enough man hath a will not to come, he hath not only an inability, but an enmity and an opposition in his will against Christ: he will not come to Christ that he may be saved, but would take up his salvation somewhere else; he would be his own Saviour, or let any one save him, rather then be saved by Christ; all things considered, especially this, that he must deny himself, and neither be found trusting to his own righteousnesse, nor acting any unrighteousnesse, if he desires to be saved by Christ. And as there is a resistance in the will of man against the true dispensation of Gospell grace; so against any other dispensation whereby God speaketh to him. The unchanged will of man riseth up against the will of God manifested in his works, as much as against his will manifested in his word (*Isa.* 26. 11.) *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up they will not see*. If his hand be lifted up in publick judgments they will not see it, if in family or personall judgments and afflictions they will not see it, but shut their eyes and hoodwink their own understandings. Yea, they are oftentimes so wilfully, or rather so madly blind, that they had rather say it is the hand of *blind Fortune*, then the hand of the Allmighty and All-seeing God. *Now who is so blind as they that will not see?* Till this rebellion against the holy will of God with which the will of man is filled be cast out and subdued, let him speake once, yea twice, let him speake by word or works, by promises or by threatnings, by good or evill, yet man will not mark it. Thus much in generall of Gods revealing himself to man; In the next words we have the distinct ways set downe by and in which he revealeth himself: *In a dreame &c.*

JOB,

JOB. Chap. 33. Verſ. 15, 16, 17, 18.

In a dream, in a viſion of the night, when deep ſleep falleth upon men, in ſlumberings upon the bed:
Then he openeth the ears of men, and ſealeth their inſtruction.
That he may withdraw man from his purpoſe, and hide pride from man.
He keepeth back his ſoule from the pit, and his life from periſhing by the ſword.

Elihu having ſaid in the former verſe, that, *God ſpeaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not*; proceeds to give inſtance of thoſe ſeverall wayes by which God ſpeaketh to man. His firſt Inſtance is given (*v.* 15.) where he brings in God ſpeaking to man in dreams and viſions. And as he ſhews us God ſpeaking in dreams and viſions, ſo he ſets downe his aymes or ends in doing ſo, and they are three-fold.

Firſt, God aimes at mans inſtruction (*v.* 16.) *Then he openeth the ears of men, and ſealeth their inſtruction.*

The ſecond aime of God in ſuch diſpenſations, is repentance and humiliation (*v.* 17.) *That he may withdraw man from his purpoſe, and hide pride from man.*

The third and laſt end here expreſt why God ſpeaks by dreams and viſions, is mans ſalvation (*v.* 18.) *He keepeth back his ſoule from the pit, and his life from periſhing by the ſword.* Theſe are the parts and ſpecialties conſiderable in this context.

Verſ. 15. *In a dream, in a viſion of the night*, &c.

חלם *pinguis groſſities, ex vaporibus craſſis provenit ſomnus, quem ſomnia conſequuntur.*

The roote of the word rendred *a dreame*, ſignifieth that which is thick, groſſe or fat, and by a metaphor *a dreame*, becauſe dreams are naturally cauſed by groſs and thick vapours, ariſing from the ſtomack & fuming up into the head. Sleep is cauſed immediately by vapours and dreams are our work in ſleep. *A dream is an Imagination which the minde frames and formes, or which is formed and framed in the minde while we ſleepe*; or, *A dream is the worke of the ſoule, while the body is aſleep.* Sleepe is the binding up

up of the outward ſences, hearing, ſeeing, feeling, *&c.* yet then the inward ſences, phantaſie and memory are at liberty and free to worke. The phantaſie is very quick and nimble, when the body lieth as a logge and ſtirres not. The phantaſie (as we ſay) builds Caſtles in the ayre, and makes ſtrange Chimera's in the braine by day, much more by night. In Dreams, there is an image of things or perſons repreſented to us. When *Pharoah dreamed, he ſaw ſeven leane kine, and ſeven thin ears, as alſo ſeven fat kine and ſeven full ears of corne. Jacob* ſaw a ladder in his dreame reaching up to heaven, and the Angels of God aſcending and deſcending. *Joſeph* ſaw his brethrens ſheaves doing obeyſance to his ſheafe, he ſaw alſo the Sun and Moone and eleven Starrs, doing obeyſance to him. *Nebuchadnezzar* dreaming ſaw an Image with the head of gold, with ſhoulders and breaſt of ſilver, with belly and thighs of braſs, and leggs of Iron, *&c.* Theſe dreamers had images as clearely repreſented to their mindes, as any thing can be to the moſt waking and wakefull eye of the body. And though in many dreams there are no ſuch formall ſimilitudes preſented to the mind, but only a voyce heard ſpeaking, yet nothing can be declared to us in a dreame without forming in our mind ſome kind of likeneſſe. When it is ſayd that God came to *Abimelech* (*Gen:* 20. and to *Laban* Gen: 31.) and an Angel of the Lord to *Joſeph* (Math: 1.) ſpeaking to them in dreames, they had ſuch things exhibited to and impreſſed upon them, as gave the former two aſſurance that God ſpake to them, and the third that he was ſpoken to by an Angel of God.

Further, We may diſtinguiſh of dreames; Firſt, ſome are meere naturall dreames; and they ariſe foure wayes; Firſt, from the temperature of the body, Melancholly and flegmaticke perſons, have their ſpeciall dreames, and ſo have men of a ſanguine and of a cholericke complection. The firſt encline to dreame of ſad, the ſecond of ſottiſh, the third of pleaſant things, and the laſt of wrathfull wranglings and contendings. Secondly, Naturall dreames are cauſed by the diet or food which we eate, ſpeciall meate inclining to ſpeciall thoughts and imaginations. Thirdly, Meere naturall dreams flow from the buſineſs or ſpeciall worke wherein we have been ingaged in the day; as *Solomon* ſpeakes (*Eccleſ:* 5. 3.) *a dreame cometh thorow the multitude of buſineſs*; that is, a man dreams at night of what he hath been doing

ing in the day. Fourthly, Naturall dreames ariſe from vehemene affections to or deſires of what we want, and would have. Thus (*Iſa:* 29.7.) *The hungry man dreams he eats, and the thirſty man dreams he drinks*; For being pincht with hunger, and parcht with thirſt, his appetite is not only ſtrong, but fierce and violent after meat and drinke. Theſe and ſuch like are naturall dreams. I call them ſo becauſe the riſe or reaſon of them is ſeated in nature, and they are ſuch as have no other cauſe but what is common and naturall to man. Nature let alone or left under ſuch outward accidents will produce ſuch dreames.

Seconldy, There are diabolicall dreams; the devill knows how to ſtirre the humors and worke upon the phantaſies of the children of men. Satan is skilfull and diligent in ſolliciting our luſts and corruptions both day and night, and they being once ſollicited or moved to worke, cannot but worke in us both ſleeping and waking. Yea the devill can inſpire falſe doctrines and opinions by dreames, as well as provoke to wicked practiſes. Of ſuch dreamers we read (*Deut:* 13. 1, 3.) *If there be among you a falſe Prophet, or a dreamer of dreames.* Falſe Prophets had many dreams (*Jer:* 23. 25.) Such were wont to ſay, *I have dreamed, I have dreamed.* Becauſe the holy Prophets had their dreams from God, the Devill would give his unholy Prophets dreams too, which were lies and vanity, deceits and errours, leading them out of the way of God, whether we reſpect truth of doctrine, or purity of worſhip. We may reduce all diabolicall dreames to theſe two heads; They are either, Firſt, falſe dreames, that is, dreames of falſhood, for he is the father and former of lyes; or, Secondly, they are filthy defiling dreames; for he is an uncleane ſpirit, and the feweller of all filthy fires and uncleanneſſes, whether corporall or ſpirituall.

Thirdly, There are *divine dreames*, ſo called, Firſt, becauſe immediately ſent by God; Secondly, becauſe the ſubject matter of them is divine and heavenly, or ſome manifeſtation of the holy will of God to man. There are five ſpeciall Meſſages upon which dreames are ſent from God.

Firſt, To reprove or admoniſh; Thus God dealt with *Abimelech* in a dreame, that he ſhould not meddle with *Sarah* (*Gen:* 20. 3.) and with *Laban*, that he ſhould not hurt *Jacob*, nor hinder him in his journey back to his fathers houſe (*Gen:* 31. 24.)

whereupon *Jacob* told him, *God rebuked thee yeſter night.* That dream of *Pilates* wife (*Math:* 27. 19.) was ſent to admoniſh *Pilate* about giving Judgement againſt Chriſt.

Secondly, God ſends dreams to inſtruct, and informe; There are teaching dreams, that of *Joſeph* (Math: 1. 21.) was not only to ſhew him what to doe about *Mary* his eſpouſed wife, but to inſtruct him about that Great myſtery of God manifeſted in the fleſh, to ſave loſt man.

Thirdly, Dreams are ſent for ſupport and conſolation in a time of trouble (*Gen:* 28. 12.) God comforted *Jacob* by that dream, when he was in a deſolate condition, and allured him of his preſence.

Fourthly, Some dreams are ſent of God upon a ſad meſſage to afflict and terrifie; *Job* bemoaned his ſufferings and ſorrows by ſuch dreames (*Chap:* 7. 13, 14.) *When I ſay my bed ſhall comfort me, my couch ſhall eaſe my complaint, then thou ſcareſt me with dreames, and terrifieſt me with viſions.*

Fifthly, God foreſheweth what ſhall come to paſſe, he reveals his own counſels, as to future providences, by dreames and viſions. The ſeven years of famine were revealed to *Pharoah* in a dreame. And the great things of the Church, and of the world too, were revealed to *Daniel* in a dreame, and in viſions of his head upon his bed (*Dan:* 7. 1.) The meſſage of the dreame in the text was for inſtruction and admonition, as will appeare at the ſixteenth verſe; God ſpeaketh *in a dream*; and further

In a viſion of the night.

Some take *viſion* here as a ſecond way of divine revelation. And 'tis true, the Scripture ſpeakes of dreams and viſions diſtinctly (*Numb:* 12. 6.) Others make viſions to be only appurtenances to dreams; For though there have been viſions without dreams, yet dreams are ſeldome, if at all, without ſome kind of viſion. This ſeemes the intendment of this text, *In a dream, in a viſion of the night*; That is, in a dream with a viſion of the night, as making the viſion to be nothing elſe, but either a repreſentation of the matter dreamed of, or of the manner wherein it was repreſented to the dreamer. And I conceive, that *Elihu* in this verſe is ſpeaking only of one, not of two wayes of Gods revealing himſelfe to man; or rather of one then two. Yet whether we

take the viſion diſtinctly from or joyntly with the dream, the ſcope of *Elihu* in this text is equally anſwered and fulfilled.

Further, *Elihu* doth not only report the way of Gods diſcovering himſelfe, that is, in a dream, in a viſion, but he declares the time or ſeaſon of theſe dreams and viſions, or of theſe viſions in a dream; that is, *the night*, and the night conſidered under this diviſion.

Firſt, *When deep ſleep falleth upon men.*

Secondly, When they have their *ſlumberings upon their bed*; that is (as I apprehend) at the beginning of the night, and break of day (for thoſe are the ſlumbring times of the night) or in the middle of the night or midnight, for then uſually men are fallen into and abide in a deep ſleep, or as we render, Then

Deep ſleep falleth upon men.

Some ſleeps, as we may ſay, are but ſhallow ſleeps, ſlight ſleeps, in compariſon of other; Deep ſleep is that which we call, Dead ſleep. The word here uſed by *Elihu*, notes the ſtrongeſt and the ſoundeſt ſleep, and therefore 'tis fitly diſtinguiſhed from *ſlumberings upon the bed.*

There are three words in the Hebrew which ſignifie *ſleep*; whereof the firſt ſignifies *ſleep* in generall; the ſecond, *deep ſleep*; the third, any *ſlight ſleep*, which we here tranſlate *ſlumbering*. Ordinary ſleeping is more then ſlumbring, and a deep ſleep, more then ordinary ſleep; we commonly ſay, ſuch a man *is faſt aſleep*, he is, as it were, bound hand and foote. Sleep is the binding of the ſenſes, and ſo, by conſequence the binding of all the members of the body. We often finde this diſtinction in Scripture (*Pſal:* 132. 4.) *I will not give ſleep to mine eyes, nor ſlumber to my eye-lids*; that is, I will not only not give my ſelfe to fall aſleep, but I wil not ſo much as (according to our manner of ſpeaking in that matter) forget my ſelfe. We finde the ſame diſtinction (*Pſ:* 121.4.) *Behold, he that keepeth Iſrael ſhall neither ſlumber nor ſleep.* The words are a deſcription of the exact watchfulneſſe of God over his people, he that doth not ſo much as *ſlumber*, he that never lays his eyes together, he that doth not only not take a nap (as we ſay) but not ſo much as once nod (to ſo little the Hebrew word may be drawne downe, which is likewiſe the importance of the Greek word, he, I ſay, that doth not ſo much as nod) is farre from ſleepe, furtheſt of all from deep ſleep. In both theſe degrees of ſleep, the Lord ſpeakes by Dreames, firſt, *in deep ſleep*; Secondly, *in ſlumbrings.*

תרדמה plus quam שנה plus eſt quam תנומה - Aben Ezra.

נום aliquando ſimpliciter redditur dormire; Græcè eſt νυσ'αζειν proprie capite nutante dormire. Bold:

Some conceive that *Elihu* intended by theſe different words, to ſet forth two ſorts of dreams; Firſt, thoſe dreams which men have when extraordinary deep ſleep falls upon them; ſuch as that ſpoken of (*Gen:* 2. 21.) *God commanded a deep ſleep to fall on Adam*, when he tooke the rib out of his ſide and formed the woman. We read alſo (*Gen:* 15. 12.) that a deep ſleep fell on *Abraham* when God revealed to him what ſhould become of his poſterity, and how they ſhould be in *Egypt*, and there much oppreſſed foure hundred yeares, *&c.* It is ſaid alſo (1 *Sam:* 26. 12.) *A deep ſleep from the Lord was fallen upon them*; that is, upon *Saul*, and his guards, who lay round about him. And that might be called a ſleep from the Lord, both becauſe it was a ſleep which the Lord ſent, and becauſe it was an extream deep ſleep. Secondly, there are dreams in ordinary ſleep, or in very ſlumbrings or noddings upon the bed, we may call them waking dreames. Thus *Elihu* ſheweth God taking ſeverall times or ſeaſons for the revealing of himſelfe in dreams; ſometimes in deep ſleep, and often in the leaſt and ſlighteſt ſleeps, called ſlumbrings.

I ſhall not here inſiſt upon or diſcourſe the way of Gods manifeſting himſelfe to the Ancients, by dreams & viſions, but referre the Reader to what hath already been done upon the 4th Chapter at the 12th and 13th verſes; where *Eliphaz* ſpeaks almoſt in the ſame manner as *Elihu* here about viſions; And, indeed there is a very great Conſent between their two parts in this booke, that of *Eliphaz*, and this of *Elihu*; They were both holy and propheticall men, both of them had the ſame deſigne in ſpeaking about dreams and viſions, namely, to convince and humble *Job*; and both of them expreſſe themſelves in terms of a very neere Cognation. So that if the reader pleaſe to conſult that place (*Job* 4. 12, 13.) he will find theſe words farther cleared, as to the nature and ſeverall kinds of viſions. And if he turne to what hath been done upon the 14th verſe of the 7th Chapter, he may find the doctrine of dreams further opened.

Only let me adde here a note or two.

Firſt, *It hath been the uſe of God to reveale his mind by dreams.*

And

And I may give you five reaſons why God uſed to apply himſelf to man in dreams: Firſt, becaule in ſleep man is, as I may ſay, a beſt leiſure for God to deal with him; he is not diſtracted with buſineſſe, nor hurried with the labours of this life, but is at reſt. Secondly, when we are awake we are very ready to debate and diſcuſſe what we receive by our own reaſon, we are ready to logick it with God; but in ſleep we take things barely as offered without diſcuſſions or diſputes. Thirdly, in ſleepe when all is quiet, that which God repreſents, takes and leaves a deeper impreſſion upon the mind of man. Common experience teacheth us how dreams ſtick, and how thoſe apprehenſions which we have in our ſleep dwell & abide with us when awake. Fourthly, I conceive the Lord doth this chiefly that he may ſhew his divine skill in teaching & inſtructing man, or that he hath a peculiar art in teaching; he teaches ſo, as none of the maſters of learning were ever able to teach and inſtruct their Schollars. There was never any man could teach another when he was aſleep; they that are taught muſt at leſt be awake, yea they muſt not only be awake but watchfull; but now God is ſuch a teacher, ſuch an inſtructor, that when we are aſleep he can convay inſtruction and teach us his leſſons; this (I ſay) doth wonderfully magnifie the divine skill and power of God, who is able to make us heare and underſtand doctrine even when we are aſleep and cannot heare. There may be alſo a fifth conſideration moving God to this. Poſſibly God would hereby aſſure us, that the ſoul is a diſtinct eſſence, and hath its diſtinct operations from the body; and that even death it ſelf cannot deprive the ſoul of man of its working. For what is ſleep but a kind of death? *Sleep is a ſhort death, and death is a long ſleepe.* Now when the body is (upon the matter) laid aſide, the ſoul can goe to work: when the body lyes like a block and ſtirs not, the ſoul can beſtir it ſelf about many matters, and run its thoughes to the utmoſt ends of the earth, yea and raiſe them up to the higheſt heavens, in bleſſed intercourſes with God himſelf. There's no need to prove the matter of fact that 'tis ſo; what night, with reference to ſome or other, doth not utter this poynt of knowledg? nor need I ſtay to prove that this is, if not a demonſtrative, yet a very probable argument of the diſtinct ſubſtantiallity of the ſoul from the body, namely its operations when the body (with all its proper and peculiar faculties and powers) is a ſleepe, and contributes

butes nothing to thoſe operations. For though it be granted that ſome irrationall creatures (who have no immortall part, nor any thing ſubſtantiall in them diſtinct from their bodies, though it be granted I ſay, that theſe) may have dreames; yet their dreams differ as much from thoſe of men, as themſelves doe.

Secondly Note,

The revelation of the mind of God by dreams and viſions, was much, yea moſt uſed in thoſe ancient times. When God had not ſo fully revealed his mind by Scripture or his mind in the Scripture, then he ſpake often in dreams and viſions; and hence the old Prophets were called ſeers.

The Apoſtle reports, God ſpeaking at ſundry times, and in divers manners in times paſt, unto the fathers by the Prophets, (*Heb.* 1.1.) The Greek text hath two very ſignificant words, πολυμέρως & πολυτρόπως. the former moſt properly implying how God gave out his mind in divers meaſures, or how he parcelled it out, the other implying the ſeverall wayes in which he gave it out. As the meaſures were various, ſometimes more ſometimes leſſe of his mind about divine matters and myſteries being diſperſed, ſo the wayes manners and formes of this diſpenſation were very various; yet the moſt uſuall way was by dreams and viſions (*Numb.* 12.6.) *If there be a Prophet among you* (ſaith the Lord) *I the Lord will make my ſelf known unto him in a viſion, and ſpeak to him in a dreame.* Yea we find that in the firſt dayes of the Goſpel, dreames and viſions were frequent. The Apoſtle falling into a trance had a viſion (*Acts* 10.10.) *He ſaw heaven opened and a certain veſſell deſcend, &c.* And when Chriſt would have the Apoſtle *Paul* carry the Goſpell into *Macedonia*, a viſion appeared to him in the night (*Acts* 16.9.) *There ſtood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, ſaying, come over to Macedonia and help us.* The ſame Apoſtle ſaith (2 *Cor.* 12.1, 2.) *I will come to viſions and revelations of the Lord, whether in the body I cannot tell, or out of the body I cannot tell.* Pauls ſoul was wrapt up in ſuch high and intimate converſes with God, that he even forgot how it was with his body, or had little to doe with it. Which ſuites well with that deſcription which the Apoſtle *John* gave of himſelf, when he had the whole mind of God concerning the ſtate of his Church to the end of the world, revealed to him in ſeverall viſions, *I* (ſaith he *Rev.* 1.10)

was

was in the spirit on the Lords day, &c. That's is a famous promise, which was first reported by the Prophet *Joel* (*Chap.* 2. 28.) and after repeated by the Apostle *Peter* (*Acts* 2. 17.) *I will poure out my Spirit upon all flesh, &c. and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.* Thus it is every where clear in Scripture, that dreames and visions were frequent both in the Old Testament times, and in the beginning of the New;

But now *in these last dayes* (as the Apostle saith *Heb.* 1. 2,3. passing from those former wayes of Revelation described in the first verse) *God having spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the Worlds, who is* [*also*] *the brightnesse of his glory, and the expresse Image of his person: God I say having spoken to us by his Son*, and we having now a clearer manifestation of the mind of God then the old fathers had, the Son who once spake to us in person on earth, still speaking to us in the Gospell every day; therefore now for any to look after dreams and visions, or visible apparitions for the revealing of the mind of God, is to goe backward to the old state of the Jewish Church, or to the infancy of the Gospell Church, while the Canon or Rule of the Scripture as to all matters of faith and holy life was not fully finished and compleated. And though we ought to be farre from limiting God, yet he hath limited us from looking after any wisdome in the knowledge of his will above that which is written (1 *Cor.* 4. 6.) The Apostle also testifying by the Spirit of God, that the Scripture is sufficient to *make every man wise to salvation and the man of God perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works* (that good work especially of helping others to salvation) 1 *Tim.* 3. 15. 17.

Ardentibus votis precatus sum ut daret mihi deus certũ sensum scripturæ; et pastum fari cum domino deo meo ne mihi visiones vel somnia mitteret. Luth. loci com. quartæ classis.

Luther observing how many were deluded in his time by dreames and visions, which they falsely attributed to God, as the immediate Author of them; earnestly prayed about two things: First, that God would give him a sound understanding of his mind revealed in the Scriptures. Secondly, that he would not send him dreames or visions, yea, saith he, I even contracted with God that he would not. And doubtlesse he did this upon a double ground. First, to oppose the wild opinions and practices of those, who had nothing to pretend for them but dreames and visions. Secondly, to advance the honour of the written word in its sufficiency, not only

only without the help of any humane tradition, but without any further divine revelation. And therefore though God should please to speak to us now by dreames and visions, yet that were only (as the Apostle speaks about his adding of an oath to his promise (*Heb.* 6. 17.) to shew that he is (*ex abundanti*) more abundantly willing to satisfie our weaknesse by such a condiscention, then that there is a necessity of it, with respect to any deficiency of the Scriptures fullnesse. And hence it is, that if men shall professe they have received any thing from God by dreams or visions, concerning what is either to be beleeved or done, the matter of those dreams must be examined and weighed at the ballance of the Scriptures, and is no further to be credited then as 'tis found agreeable thereunto.

It cannot be denyed but that men may make profitable use of their dreames at this day; they may see much of themselves when their eyes are shut up by sleepe. Evill men may see their lusts at worke in the night, and find out what lust is most working and wakefull in them. What is said in History of the ancient Persian Kings, that they were seldome seen in the day, but came to view in the night, is true of a mans speciall sin, or of that sin which reignes and Kings it in him. What ugly apparitions of lust hath many a man in his nightly dreams, especially of those filthy lusts which are most proper to the night? Thus also good men have sometimes a clearer sight of their graces in the night by dreames, then in the duties of the day. What holy frames of heart? what lively actings of grace? what sweet and ravishing communion with God have many godly men found and felt in dreames? That may at lest, be somewhat of *Davids* meaning, when he said (*Psal.* 16. 17.) *My reines also instruct me in the night season.*

Lastly, Though we cannot make any certaine conclusions, either what we are, or what we are to doe from dreames; yet from them they who are wise and watchfull may sometimes gather strong conjectures about both or either. To make dreames the rule or warrant of what we doe is extreamly dangerous, yet that we may have hints what to do in a dreame, I nothing doubt, nor can there be any danger in it, while the matter hinted is consonant to the rule of the word, both as that which is lawfull to be done, and lawfull for us (all circumstances considered) to doe. Other-

wise, whatsoever we may think our selves warned or warranted to doe by dreames, is but a mock or trick put upon us by the Devill, or a deceit of our own foolish selfish hearts.

Thus we have seene the first way of Gods speaking to men of old, *by dreames and visions of the night*; what work God is pleased to make with and in man by such speakings, will appeare distinctly in the three following verses.

Vers. 16. *Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction.*

In this verse *Elihu* gives us the first of those gracious designes or purposes of God in sending dreams or visions of the night; *then he openeth the ears of men.* There is a twofold eare of man, first, externall, that organ of hearing placed in the head. Secondly, internall, that power of hearing seated in the heart. God can uncover or open both. There are but few who have their outward eare stopt, we rarely meet with a deaf man. But we every where meete with and speak to those who are internally deafe. The Lord openeth this inward eare, and he only is able to doe it. *God opened the heart* (or internall eare) *of Lydia to attend to the things which were spoken of Paul* (Acts 16.14.) The Septuagint render this place of *Job* expressely so. *Then he openeth the mind of men.* Their translation comes close to the sence, though not to the letter of the Originall.

τότε ἀποκαλύπτει νοῦ ἀνθρώπων. Sep.

Further, the Hebrew is (as we put in the Margin) *He revealeth or uncovereth the eares of men.* This revealing or uncovering of the eare, say some, noteth only private speaking, and is a similitude taken from a common custome among men, who when they would convey their mind secretly to a friend that stands by, put their head near to his eare, and take up the brim of his hat, or put by his haire (if long) that they may whisper in his eare. Thus in a dreame God whispers and speaks silently unto men. This seems to have a suitablenesse with that (*Chap.* 4. 12, 13.) where *Eliphaz* spake of a thing *brought secretly to him*, or that was whispered or stoln into him. But I conceive there is more in this place then the intendment of a secret and private conveyance of the mind of God unto man in a vision or dreame.

Quidam hanc loquendi formulam natam esse putant ex hebræorum consuetudine, qui cum antiquis seculis prolixam alerent comam, eaq; auros operirent, si quis arcanum

And therefore this opening of the eare imports the removing of

or taking away of that (whatsoever it is) which hinders the effectuall hearing or obeying of those messages which God sends to men. When God spake in a dream, he did more then speak, he open'd the ear, yea, he gave an eare to hear: This powerfull work of God upon the heart is elegantly expressed by *opening* the eare, because when the ears are stopt, we cannot hear, till that which stops them is pluckt out or taken away; so that here we have speaking with effect, or the cleare and penetrating power of the Spirit of God sweetly and prevailingly insinuating his mind to man. God speaks so as he will be heard.

aliquid in illorum aures insussurare vellet deducebat defluentes capillos et in apertas aures tacito murmure aliquid instillabat. Sanct: *Cinthius aurem vellit et admonuit, &c.* Horat. *Loquitur et audire facit.* *Aurem revelare vel aperire est insinuare aliquid auribus animisq; quod intimis sensibus reponendum sit. Clariorem et penetrantiorem insinuationem voluntatis divinæ denotat.* Coc:

Hence Observe.

First, *The eare of man is naturally stopt against the teachings of God.*

There are many things which stop the eares of man, or man hath many eare stoppers. I will name seven, all which God removes and takes away when he effectually reveals his mind to man. First, the eare of man is stopt with ignorance, that's a thick vaile or covering upon the eare, and keeps out the mind of God till it be removed. And, Secondly, Unbeliefe is another ear-stopper; till the Lord removeth that we cannot hear. Thirdly, Impenitency or hardnesse of heart stops the eare, there are a number of Scriptures I might give for each of these. Fourthly, the love of any particular sin is an eare-shutter or an eare-stopper, and the Lord removes that, when he opens the eare. Fifthly, Prejudices stop the eare, prejudices somtimes against the person speaking, somtime against the word spoken. That man will never hear a word to purpose, who hath a prejudice against the person, or a prejudice against the word, either a prejudice against the man, or against the matter. Sixthly, Pride stops the eare too, the proud man will not hearken, therefore God humbles and brings down the spirit that the word may be heard. Seventhly, and lastly, the World is a great ear-stopper, that locks up the eare against the word; the world in the profits of it, and the world in the pleasures of it, and the world in the cares of it, and the world in the fears of it, the world by or in every one of these stops the eare, and by these the eares of all men naturally are stopped, so that they are as it is said (*Psal.* 58.4.) *like the deafe adder, that stops her eare, and will not hear the voyce of the charmer, charme he never so wisely.*

Till all theſe ſtoppers are removed, and the eare opened, there is no receiving of the word.

Secondly Obſerve.

God is able to open and unlock the eare of man.

Though it hath never ſo many ſtopples in it, he can pull them out, never ſo many locks upon it, though all the ſeven ſpoken of, and ſeven more obſtruct the ear, yet he can open them all, and make a free and uncontroulable paſſage for his word into the remoteſt and cloſeſt chambers of the ſoul. God can ſpeak loud enough, not only to make the deafe, but the dead hear his voyce. *Verily, verily I ſay unto you* (ſaith Chriſt, *Joh.* 5. 25.) *the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead ſhall hear the voyce of the Son of God: and they that hear ſhall live.* By the dead he means not thoſe who are corporally, but ſpiritually dead, that is, dead in ſins and treſpaſſes, and in danger of eternall death for their ſins and treſpaſſes, even theſe heard the voyce of the Son of God then ſpeaking perſonally, and heard it afterwards miniſterially, in the diſpenſation of the Goſpell, and that voyce revived them, not only by giving them the comfort of that naturall life which they had before, but by bringing in a new ſpirituall life which before they had not. Then the internall eare is opened to purpoſe when thoſe internall or myſtically darke graves of ſin are opened, and the ſoul comes forth into the light of life.

Yet more diſtinctly. God may be ſaid to uncover or open the eares of men, when he doth theſe four things.

Firſt, When he makes us not only to heare but to attend, not only to heare but to hearken; or not only to heare but to give eare. *Many give the word of God the hearing, but they doe not give eare to the word of God.*

Secondly, God opens the ear when he makes us not only attend, but underſtand, or when he takes the vaile off from our minds. The Apoſtle ſaith of the *Jewes* (2 Cor: 3. 14.) *The vaile remaineth upon them untaken away to this day in the reading of the old Teſtament* (and it doth ſo ſtill) ſo that as they could not, ſo yet they cannot, *Looke to the end of that which is aboliſhed*; that is, to Chriſt, who was the end or ſcope at which the whole Ceremoniall Law (now aboliſhed) did then ayme. When once the eare is divinely opened, then the vaile of ignorance and ſpirituall blindneſſe

neſſe is taken off from the mind, both as to that greateſt truth, and all other neceſſary truths. The opened eare is an underſtanding eare.

Thirdly, God openeth the eare when he cauſeth us to believe what we perceive and underſtand. As faith ſets the whole ſoule aworke for God, ſo faith is the great worke of God upon the ſoule. When the eare is opened, truth is not only knowne, but favingly believed.

Fourthly, This opening of the eare maketh the ſoule obedient; Jeſus Chriſt in that great prophecy of him (*Pſal.* 40. 6.) to ſhew his ready obedience to his fathers command, ſaith, *Mine eare haſt thou opened* (or digged) The eare of Chriſt was never ſhut in the leaſt, either through ignorance or unbeliefe; but he is ſayd to have his eare opened, only to ſhew his conſtant preparedneſs and readineſs for obedience. He came into the world with an open eare to all the will of God; and therefore it followeth in the 7th and 8th verſes of that Pſalme, *Then ſaid I, loe I come, in the volume of thy booke it is written of me, I delight to doe thy will, O my God, yea thy law is within my heart.* Chriſt is brought in by another Prophet ſpeaking to the ſame poynt with ſome little variety, but with very great ſignificancy of expreſſion (*Iſa:* 50. 4, 5.) *He wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine eare to heare as the learned*; we uſually ſay, Sleep is in the eye, yet this prophecy intimates a ſleep in the eare, *thou haſt wakened mine eare.* What we are to underſtand by this wakened eare, is cleare in the next words of the ſame prophecy, *The Lord hath opened mine eare*, that's the word of *Eliphaz*, and the conſequence of opening the eare, ſet downe in the Propher, is the ſame now given in this poynt, *The Lord hath opened mine eare, and I was not rebellious.* He doth not ſay, The Lord opened mine eare, and I heard, but, *I was not rebellious*; that is, I gave up my ſelfe to obey the word or command, which I heard. The ſame Prophet (*Iſa:* 48. 8.) deſcribing the rebellion of the *Jewes*, puts this as the reaſon of it, *Yea thou heardeſt not*, (that is, thou didſt not attend) *yea thou knoweſt not*, that is, thou didſt not underſtand, yea *thine eare was not opened*; as if he had ſayd, thine unopened eare was the cauſe why thou diddeſt neither attend, nor underſtand, nor obey the word ſpoken to thee. So much of the firſt gracious deſigne of God in ſpeaking to men by dreams and

and visions of the night; *Then he openeth the ears of men.* The second is given in the latter part of the verse.

And sealeth their Instruction.

חתם *signavit obsignavit; confirmavit perfecit.*

The word signifies not only *to seale*, but to *perfect or conclude. He sealeth Instruction.*

There is a threefold use of seales and sealing; First, to distinguish one thing from another; Secondly, to keep things safe and secret; Thirdly, sealing is to confirme and ratifie; A Bond, Deed, or Evidence in writing, till it hath a Seale, is but a scrip of paper of no force, but when once the Seale is put to it, then it is confirmed, then there is strength and force in it. A seale fortifies the writing, or maketh it authentick. *He sealeth their*

Instruction.

מיסר *a radice* יסר *vinvit ligavit per metaphoram castigavit erudivit, corripuit verbis aut verberibus.*

The word here used signifies both correction and Instruction, and so it is rendred by some here, *He openeth their eares, or sealeth their chastisement.* Mr *Broughton* takes that sense, *And imprinteth why they are chastised*; that is, (as himselfe expounds it) when he hath chastised them, he sealeth up the decree of their judgement; or as another, He proposeth it unto them as firme and concluded, if they doe not repent and imprinteth in their mind the certainty of it, as also the true cause of it. We render fully to the sense of the word and scope of the text, *He sealeth their instruction*; that is, upon the opening of the eare there is a sealing or a setting home the word which is received. When the eare is opened to receive, God will make men hold what they have received. The sealing of instruction, signifies the efficacy, energy, or effectuall working of God with the word, he ratifies and confirmes it to the soule, he maketh his word as sure to them as a sealed Bond, both with respect to the duty commanded, and the mercy promised. And, indeed, we have as much need to have Instruction sealed, as to have the eare opened; for 'tis possible the eare may be opened, we may heare and understand, and in some sense believe, yea obey, and yet not have the instruction sealed. The instruction is then sealed, when we keepe what is received, as the eare is opened when we receive what is offered. Unlesse the instruction be sealed, we heare and obey only for the present, not for the time to come, that is, we doe not retaine and

Disciplinamentorum velut impresso sigillo consignat. Tygur:

Phrasis obsignandi eruditionem, denotat efficaciter erudire sc: ut non concedatur ei qui eruditur non attendere et vim eruditionis non sentire. Coc:

and hide the word received for use and practise.

Now, whether we take this sealing in reference either to correction or instruction, it yeelds us matter of profitable meditation. First, As it referrs to correction.

Note.

God assureth sinfull man that he shall smart for it, unlesse he hearken and obey.

It is as sure that he shall, as if he saw it under hand and seale; or as if the sentence were engraven upon his conscience, and fixt before his eyes. If the eare be not obedient to instruction, the back must submit to correction; *If the word will not doe it, the rod must*; *if teaching will not serve the turne, chastning shall*; *He sealeth their correction.* Every correction threatned is not certainly inflicted; for *Elihu* saith afterward (*v.* 26.) *He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable to him*; but the meaning is, mans correction is sealed in case he proceeds on in his sin; if he does not give proof that his eare is opened by his obedience to instruction, there is no escaping correction. The correction of the deerest children of God is sealed, if they heare and doe not. God will not cocker his stubborne children, nor spoyle them by sparing the rod; He will certainly meet with them one time or other, either by sicknesse, or poverty, or reproach; the order the warrant is sealed for their correction.

Castigationem eorum obsignat. i. e. significat eis se certo eos castigaturum nisi a peccato desiterint, non secus ac si sententiam hanc literis mandasset, easq; literas obsignasset. Pisc:

Vellicans ipsorum aures et imminentes ipsis castigationes an sua ipsorum insculpens. Bez:

We may much more apply this to the wicked, to the ungodly and rebellious, who though they have their outward ears open, yet their hearts remain shut; If the correction of the godly be sealed in that case, to be sure, the destruction of the wicked is; they are sealed for death, yea they are sealed for hell; the writ of their eternall Judgement is sealed. *If Judgement must begin at the house of God, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appeare? what shall the end of them be that obey not the Gospel of God?*

Further, Take it as we render it, referring to instruction, *He sealeth their instruction.*

Whence note.

God is able to set home his instructions effectually upon the soule.

He can leave such an impression upon the heart, as as shall never be forgotten nor worne out. He can make every word stick;

And

And so this is but a further illustration of what was said before; he openeth their ears to receive the word, and then sealeth instruction upon them. The Apostle speaking of some persons converted, who were the fruit of his ministry, saith, *Ye are the seale of mine Apostleship* (1 Cor: 9. 2, 3.) that is, ye confirme and ratifie my ministry, that it is of God, and that God is in it. Now as the conversion of sinners, and the building up of Saints, is the seale of our ministry; so the sealing of instruction upon the soule, is the conversion of sinners, and the edification of Saints. When a sinner is converted, his instruction is sealed upon him, and when a Saint is built up and edified, and increaseth in the things of God, then instruction is sealed upon him also. And untill we thus profit by the word, we have the word, as I may say, without a seale, nothing fastens upon us.

Thus much of the first designe of God in sending dreams and visions in those times, it was to open the ears of men, and to seale their Instruction; This being only a generall benefit aymed at by those meanes, we have those which are more speciall set downe in the words which follow.

Vers. 17. *That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man.*

This 17th verse containes two of those blessed ends or designes of God in revealing himselfe to man by dreams and visions, or by visions in a dream, of which *Elihu* spake in the two former verses; as then he takes an opportunity *to open the ears of men, and seale their Instruction*, to fasten and fix his word upon them, to make it stick and stay by them; so in all this his purpose is;

That he may withdraw man from his purpose.

הסיר *auferre erit, vel mutare in melius.*

The word rendred to *withdraw*, signifies, to take off, or put away, to remove or change for the better. (*Isa:* 1. 16.) *Put away the evill of your doings*; that is, doe no more evill, or (as the Lord speakes by another Prophet, (*Jer:* 44. 4.) *O doe not this abominable thing that I hate*; we render the word in the other sense (*Job* 27. 2.) *He hath removed my Judgement farre from me.* There is in man a kind of settledness and resolvedness upon his

his purpose, he will on; but saith *Elihu*, the Lord withdrawes him, he stretcheth forth his hand, and pull's him back; *He withdraweth*

Man.

Adam, the earthly man; The proper name of the first man, is the common name of all men. Man is earthly by nature, and so are all his naturall purposes. To draw an earthly man from that which is earthly, is no easie matter; only the power of God can doe it, *He withdraweth man*

From his purpose.

מעשה a עשה *fecit.*

The word which we render *purpose*, properly signifies a *worke*; and so it is translated not only elsewhere, but here by severall Interpreters. Mr. *Broughton* is expresse, *That the earthly man leave off to work*, and then by *work*, he means an *evill work*, as by purpose an evill purpose. The word *work* set alone usually signifies an evill work, as the word *wife* put alone is taken for a good wife (*Prov.* 8. 22.) *He that findeth a wife, findeth good*; every one that findeth a wife doth not find good, (there are many bad wives) only he that findeth a good wife findeth good. So on the contrary, the word worke standing here alone implyeth a bad work. And to withdraw man from his work, or from his purpose, is to withdraw him from his evill work or purpose: The Septuagint gives it clearly so, *that he may withdraw man from unrighteousnesse.* And Mr. *Broughton* glossing his own translation, saith, *that he leave off mans work, and do the work of God.*

Ut a moveat homo opus, sc: suum et animum malum. Iun:

ἀποστρέψαι ἄνθρωπον ἀπὸ ἀδικίας. Sept:

Againe, This terme *work*, seemes opposed to the thought or concupiscence of the inner man; *he withdraweth man from his work*, that his hand may not effect what his heart hath contrived: that the bitter root may not bring forth evill and bitter fruit. Or if we follow our translation, the sence will be the same; *He withdraweth man from his purpose*, that is, he checks and stops the inward motions and workings of mans [illegible], and so keeps him from bringing it to perfection by an outward evill work. (*Jam.* 1. 15.) *Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death*; God in great mercy takes man off from his purpose when he finds him upon an evill device or purpose; he crusheth the Cockatrice's egge that it may not be hatched,

ed, and destroyeth the conception of those Babylonish brats that they may never come to the birth. (*Mic.* 2. 1.) *Woe to them that devise mischief on their beds, when the morning is light they practice it, because it is in the power of their hand.* The work begins at the heart, there 'tis plotted and contrived; *the heart is the workhouse of sin*; now the Lord withdraws man from his purpose, and will not suffer the inward work to be accomplished by the outward work.

Further, we may refer these words either to what is past, or to what is to come; some translate (referring it to what is past) *that he may turn, or withdraw man from those things which he hath done*; that is, from those evills to which he hath already set his hand; this is done by giving man repentance, which is our being humbled for, and turning away from any evill already committed.

Ut avertat hominem ab iis quæ fecit. Vulg.

Our translation refers it to what is intended to be done, for that's *a purpose*. So the meaning is, God doth these things that he may keep man from doing that evill or mischief which he hath resolved upon, or at least is forming and hammering in his thoughts. *Abimelech* had an evill purpose for the matter (though possibly the purpose of his heart was not evill, for he said to God (and God said he spake true) *in the integrity of my heart, and innocency of my hands have I done this*, Gen. 20. 5, 6. (he was I say about an evill purpose for the matter) when he thought to take *Abrams* wife from him, but the Lord came to him in a dream, and withdrew him from the evill of his purpose. *Laban* intended evill, or hard dealing to *Jacob*, but the Lord met him also in a dreame, and withdrew him from his purpose, saying, (*Gen.* 31.24.) *Take heed thou speak not to Jacob, neither good nor bad*, that is, hinder him not in his journey, either by threatnings or by promises. Thus man is taken off or withdrawn from evill purposes by preventing grace, and from evill workes by repenting grace.

I shall prosecute the words according to our reading only, which imports that when man hath some evill purpose upon his heart, the Lord visits him [illegible] dreames and visions of the night, to withdraw him from that purpose.

Hence observe First,

Man is very forward and eager upon evill purposes.

God himself must come to withdraw and fetch him off; or otherwise he will be driving them on. The heart of man naturally hath no other purposes but evill purposes, and upon them it is set (as I may say) to purpose; that is, he will effect and bring them about if he can. When *Moses* reproved *Aaron* concerning the golden Calfe which he had made, at the instance and violent importunity of the people, *Aaron* answered for himself (*Exod.* 32. 23.) *Let not the anger of my Lord wax hot, thou knowest the people that they are set on mischiefe*, they are bent to it, they have such a mind to it, that there's no turning them from it; they will hear no reason nor take any denyall, when the fit is on them. There is a setting of the heart of man continually upon evill; the wind blowes that way, and no other way, the wind sits alwayes in that bad corner till God turneth it. There are two gracious acts of God, spoken of in Scripture, which doe exceedingly shew forth the sinfullnesse of man; every act of grace doth in its measure aggravate the sinfullnesse of man, and alwayes the higher grace acteth, the more is the sinfullnesse of man discovered, especially (I say) in this twofold act of grace. The former whereof consists in *drawing*; the latter in *withdrawing*; there is a gracious act of God in drawing the sinfull sons and daughters of men to that which is good. Man is drawne, First, into a state of grace or goodnesse, by this he is made good. He is drawn, Secondly, to acts of grace or goodnesse, by this he doth good. Of the former Christ speaks (*Joh.* 6. 44.) *No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him*, that is, no man can beleeve, (for by faith we come to Christ) except he receive power from on high. God draweth the soul to Christ, and that's a powerfull act of divine drawing, though not a compulsory act: and as God must draw man into a state of grace, which is our union with Christ by the Spirit in beleeving, so he draweth him to the acting of his graces. Of this latter the Church speaketh to Christ (*Cant.* 1.4.) *Draw me, and I will run after thee.* These gracious drawings shew that we are not only utterly unable, but averse to the receiving grace, and so becoming good, while we are in a state of nature; as also that we are very backward to doe that which is good, even when we are in a state of grace. Now as God acts very graciously in drawing man to good, so Secondly, in withdrawing him from evill, from those evill purposes and evill practices, to which all men are so easily yet so strongly carried. The Prophet (*Jer.* 2. 23, 24.)

23, 24.) elegantly deſcribes the exceeding forwardneſſe of that people to evill, while he compareth them to *the ſwift Dromodary, traverſing her wayes, and to the wild Aſſe in the Wilderneſſe that ſnuffeth up the wind at her pleaſure* (or *the deſire of her heart*) *in her occaſion who can turn her away?* As the wild Aſſe ſet upon her pleaſure, & in her occaſion, when ſhe hath a mind to it, will not be turn'd away; ſuch is the heart of man. That other Prophet (*Iſa.* 5. 18.) telleth us of thoſe *who draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and ſin as it were with a cart rope*; that is, they ſet themſelves with all their might to doe miſchief. When men are thus vainly bent upon vanity, 'tis a mighty work of God to withdraw them from their work. When, what men are purpoſed to doe they are faſtened to it as with cords and cart-ropes, what but the power of the great God can withdraw them from it?

Whence note Secondly,

Unleſſe God did withdraw and fetch us off from ſin, we ſhould run on in it continually.

When man is in an evill way, he hath no mind to returne till God turneth him; let come on't what will he will venture: 'Tis only through grace that the heart either abſtains or returns from evill. *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 18. 23.) *I have kept my ſelf from mine iniquity. David* kept himſelf from his iniquity, yet he was not his own keeper: It was by the power of God that he kept himſelf from that ſin to which he was moſt prone, even from that ſin to which his own corruptions and the Devills temptations were alwayes drawing him. *David* had ſome ſpeciall iniquity to which his heart was inclined more then any other, and from that he kept himſelf, being himſelf kept by the power of God through faith unto ſalvation. Of our ſelves we can neither keep our ſelves from doing iniquity, nor leave off doing that iniquity, which we have once done. How can man withhold himſelf from ſin, while ſin hath ſo great a hold of him, yea the Maſtery over him?

Thirdly Note.

God is graciouſly pleaſed both to withdraw man from doing evill and to draw him to repentance when he hath done evill.

Between theſe two the grace of God is daily working in and towards man, and it worketh for the effecting of both many wayes. First,

First, by his word, and that in a fourfold conſideration. First, by the word of his command, he every where in Scripture forbids man to doe any evill, and bids him repent of every evill which he doth. Secondly, by the word of his threatnings; they are as thunderbolts to deterre him. Thirdly, by the word of his promiſes, they are divine alluremenrs, ſweetly yet effectually to entice him. Fourthly, by the word of his perſwaſions, they are full of taking arguments to convince and win him.

Secondly, God withdrawes man from ſin, and drawes him to repentance when he hath ſinned, *by his works*: First, by his works of Judgment, they break him to theſe duties. Secondly, by his works of mercy, they melt him into theſe duties.

Thirdly, God withdraws man from ſin and drawes him to repentance by his patience and long-ſuffering. (Rom. 2.4.) *Deſpiſeſt thou the riches of his goodneſſe and forbearance, and long-ſuffering, not knowing that the goodneſs of God leadeth them to repentance.* As if the Apoſtle had ſaid, O man, if thou knoweſt not the meaning of Gods patience towards thee, and that this is the meaning of it, thou knoweſt nothing of the mind and meaning of God towards thee.

Fourthly, The Lord withdraweth man from evill purpoſes by ſeaſonable counſells. *David* was going on in a very bad purpoſe (1 *Sam.* 25.) and God ſtirred up *Abigail* to meete him, and by good counſell to withdraw him from his purpoſe: This *David* acknowledged (*verſ.* 32, 33.) *Bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael, which ſent thee this day to meet me.* As if he had ſaid, *I was* fully purpoſed to revenge my ſelf upon *Naball*, and had not ſurely left a man of his houſe alive by the morning light, if thou hadſt not met me; therefore bleſſed be God who hath ſent thee, and bleſſed be thy advice, and bleſſed be thou which haſt kept me this day from coming to ſhed bloud, and haſt by thy good counſell withdrawne me from that evill purpoſe.

Laſtly, conſider God withdraweth man from his ſinfull purpoſe, all or any of theſe wayes, by putting forth his mighty power with them. For his word alone, his works alone, his patience alone, the counſell of man alone would not doe it, if God did not ſtretch forth his own arme in and with theſe meanes for the doing of it. Nothing is any further efficacious then as God is with it. (*Numb.* 22.) *Balaam* was going on in his wicked purpoſe, being ſent for by

by *Balak* to curse the people of God: And though the Lord sent his Angell to be an adversary to him in his way (*vers.* 22.) so that his Asse turned out of the way into the field, yet *Balaam* went on in his purpose, yea though the Angell standing between two walls caused his Asse to turne so suddenly, that the crusht *Balaams* foot against the wall (*vers.* 25.) yet *Balaam* went on in his purpose: Once more though the Angell went further and stood in a narrow way, where there was no way to turne to the right hand nor to the left, so that the poor Asse fell down under him (*v.* 27.) and *speaking* (as the Apostle *Peter* expresseth it, 2 *Epist.* 2.) *with mans voyce rebuked the madnesse of the Prophet*; Yet so mad he was that all these checks and warnings, could not withdraw him from his purpose. And what the Lord did at that time to *Balaam* by an Angell, that he doth by some other means and providences to stop many from their evill purposes, who yet will not be stopt. He speaks to them in the ministry of his word, he speaks to them in his works; he spreads their way with roses, he hedgeth up their way with thorns, he bestoweth sweet mercies upon them, he sends sharp afflictions upon them, to withdraw them from their evill projects and purposes, yet on they goe like *Balaam*, unlesse he send more then an Angell, even his holy Spirit to withdraw them.

Lastly, *Elihu* reports it as a speciall favour of God to withdraw man from his purpose.

Whence note.

It is a great mercy to be hinder'd in sinfull purposes and intendments.

Disappointments are acts of grace, when we are acting against grace; If God stop us from doing evill, not onely by his word, but by blowes, or by a hedge of thorns, yea if he stop us by a drawn sword, it is a great mercy. Though God throw us to the ground (as he did *Saul*, afterwards *Paul*, when he went with a bloody purpose to vex and persecute the Saints (*Acts* 9.) let us count our selves exalted, and rejoyce in it more then in any worldly exaltation. 'Tis a rich mercy to be kept from executing an evill purpose, though by our owne poverty and outward misery. The doing of that which is sinfull, is worse then any thing that can be done to us, or endured by us, as a stop against sin. Sin hath

hath death in it; sin hath wrath in it; sin hath hell in it; sin hath Devill and all in it; therefore to be kept from sin, let it be by what means it will, if by paines and pining sicknesses, if by reproaches and disgraces, yea if by death, we have cause to blesse God. The greatest and sorest Judgement which God powres upon sinfull men, is to let them alone in or not to withdraw them from their sins. To be suffered to goe on and prosper in sin, is the worst of sufferings, the last of Judgements, the next Judgement to hell it selfe, and an infallible signe of an heire of hell. Thus the wrath of God waxed hot against *Israel when he gave them up to their owne hearts lusts, and they walked in their owne Counsel* (Psal: 81. 11.) This was the highest revenge that God could take upon that sinfull people. He sayd a little before, *Israel would none of me*; when God wooed them they were so coy, they would have none of him; and then, said he, goe on, take your fill of sin; I give you up to your owne hearts lusts. The Lord did not say, I gave them up to the sword, to the famine, or to the pestilence, but to their owne hearts lusts, and to walke on in their own way; *That person or people may be sure, God hath purposed evill against them, whom he will not withdraw from their evill purposes.* The severity of the wrath of God against the Gentiles is expresst and summ'd up in this (*Rom:* 1. 26, 28.) *He gave them up to vile affections; he gave them up to a reprobate mind, to doe things which were not convenient. A naturall man left to himselfe, will soone doe such things as nature it selfe abhorreth and blusheth at.* The same dreadfull doome is denounced (*Rev:* 22. 11.) *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still.* I will not withdraw him from his way, let him goe on and perish, let him goe on and sink downe to the pit of perdition for ever. As St *John* in the *Revelation* foretelling the Church, given up or left to (not in) great sufferings of all sorts; *Here is the patience of the Saints*. So when we see the world given up and left in great sinnings of any sort, especially if to sinnings of all sorts, we may truely and sadly say, *Here is the wrath of God*. 'Tis therefore a great mercy, if God will any way withdraw man from his sinfull wayes and purposes, especially when he taketh such gentle wayes, as dreams and visions, counsels and instructions, *to withdraw man from his purpose*, and (as it followeth in this verse) *to*

hide

hide pride from man.

כסה *texit operuit, impo nendo aliquid quo tegas.*

The word which we render *to hide*, is to hide by casting a covering, a vayle, a garment, or any other thing, over what we desire should be hid, (*Prov:* 12. 23.) *A prudent man concealeth knowledge*; it is this word; he doth not pretend to know so much as he knoweth; he puts a vayle upon his own abilities, (as *Moses* upon his face when there was such a shining beauty imprinted there) rather then reveales them unnecessarily or uncalled. *'Tis the foolish man, or he that hath but a shew of wisdome, who loves and affects to be shewing it.* But to the text. The word is used also, to note that gracious act of God, his pardoning the sin of man. (*Psal:* 32. 1.) *Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered.* God covers our sins in the riches of his grace, by the perfect righteousnesse of Jesus Christ.

Now there are two wayes by which *God hideth pride from man.* First, by pardoning it; Secondly, preventing it. Here to hide pride from man, properly, is not to pardon it when acted, but to prevent or keep man from the acting of it; God indeed hides the pride of man by pardoning it (and that's a high act of grace) and he hideth pride from man by keeping man from doing proudly, or from shewing his pride in his doings.

גאוה *superbia excellentia.*

The word rendred *pride*, signifies Eminency, or Excellency, because men are usually proud of that wherein they are eminent and excell; there lyes the temptation to pride. And therefore as a man should turne away his eyes from a beautifull harlot, lest she should ensnare him, so God hides mans owne beauties, eminencies, and excellencies, even his best workes from him, lest he should be proud of them, and so goe a whoring after them: or as God did with the body of *Moses*, he not only buryed him, but hid him (for 'tis sayd, (*Deut:* 34. 6.) *No man knoweth of his sepulcher to this day*) and 'tis well conceived that the reason why God hid his sepulcher, was, lest the people of *Israel* should be drawne aside to some undue or superstitious veneration of him. So God hideth (by some meanes or other) that which is most eminent in us, from us, lest it should draw us aside to some undue estimation of it, and so prove but matter or fewel for pride to kindle upon. Thus the Lord hideth pride from us, when he hideth that from us, which (considering our corruption) may probably make us proud.

And

מאבד

And the originall word here used to signifie the man from whom God hideth pride, hath a neere cognation to this notion about hiding pride it selfe. Man is twice expreſt in this verse, yet not by the same word; The first word notes man in the weakneſſe of his constitution, *an earthly man*; This second notes man in the powerfulnes of his condition, *a strong man*, a mighty man, an eminent man, a man with all his furniture, in the fullnes of his earthly glory and greatnes; when man hath much naturall power, much civill power, with the various additions and ornaments of both these powers upon him, then man is in greatest danger to be proud, & then God *hideth pride from man.* And who can hide pride from such a man but God alone. Men commonly blow up such men with pride by great applauses, and such men have mostly great thoughts and high apprehensions of themselves, and are very forward to discover (which is the greatest discovery of their weakness) their owne pride. *God only hideth pride from man*; that is, he makes it not to be, as well as hinders it's appearing; that which is hidden is as if it were not. The word is used in that sense (*Job* 3. 10.) *Because he did not hide sorrow from mine eyes*; Sorrow is hidden from us when the matter of sorrow is so taken away, that we sorrow not at all. To hide pride is to take away the matter and occasion, the incentives and motives of pride, whatsoever is a nurse of pride, or doth encourage the pride of our hearts, that's *to hide pride from man.*

Againe, We may take this word, *pride*, in a large sense, as Comprehending all sin; *He withdraweth man from his purpose, and hideth pride*; that is, sin of all sorts *from man*; and doubtlesse there is pride of one kinde or other in every act of sin; There is a heightening of the spirit against God, some dissatisfaction with the mind and will of God, and thence a setting up of our will against the will of God in every sinner, especially in bold and wilfull sinners. Such sinners would not let the will of God stand, but desire that their own may. This is pride; This in some degree is mingled with every sin, and pride leads to all sin; therefore in Scripture sometimes an humble or meek man is oppos'd, not only to a proud man in speciall, but to a wicked man in generall (*Psal:* 147. 6.) *The Lord lifteth up the meek, he casteth the wicked down to the ground.* Where the *wicked* man in the latter part of the verse, stands in opposition to the *meek* or humble

ble man in the former part of it. Nor can it be denyed, but that as pride is in it selfe a very great wickednes, so it gives a propension and fitnesse for the doing of all manner of wickednesse. And thus take it in the largest sense, 'tis a truth that God hideth pride, that is, every sin from man, otherwise he would soone shew forth any sin as much as pride. But I rather keep to that strictnesse of Interpretation here, as pride is opposed to humilitie, which is not only a choyce grace, but the ornament of all those graces which are hidden in the heart, and held out in the life of a gracious man. And thus the Lord by exercising man with dreams and visions in his affliction, doth first stop and check the very purposes of evill, that they come not to act, and when man hath brought to passe or acted any good purpose, he keeps him from ostentation. *He hideth pride from man.*

It being the Lords designe to hide pride from man, by those fore-named dispensations.

Observe, First.

Man is naturally much disposed and very prone to pride.

Those things which Children are apt to abuse or hurt themselves with, their parents hide from them; They will hide edge-tooles from them, lest they get a wound by medling with them; They will hide fruit from them, lest by eating overmuch they get a surfet. Thus the Lord our tender father often hides all the means and occasions of pride from the eyes of his children, because they are so ready to boast and lift up themselves in pride. *Man* (as was shewed at the 13th verse of the former Chapter) *is a proud piece of flesh, and hath much proud flesh in him.* The Prophet saith (*Ezek:* 7. 10.) *Pride hath budded*; pride hath a roote, and it brings forth fruit. There is a two-fold pride, or pride of two sorts. First, secret unseene pride, or pride of heart; Secondly, open visible pride, or pride of life. In allusion to the Prophets metaphor, we may say, there is pride in the bud, and pride in the roote, pride budded outwardly.

First, At the tongue, men speak proud words, they speak boastingly and vaine-gloriously (*Psal:* 75. 5.) *Speak not with a stiff neck*, that is, speak not proudly. Pride budded at the tongue of *Nebuchadnezzar* (Dan: 4. 30.) when he walked in his Pallace and said, *Is not this great Babell that I have built for the house of the*

the kingdome, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my Majesty. Here was pride budding at the tongue.

Secondly, Pride buddeth also at the eye, in scornfull lofty looks. *David* profest that *his heart was not haughty, nor his eyes lofty* (Psal: 131. 1.) The haughtinesse of many mens hearts may be seene at those windowes of the body, the eyes, in lofty looks. These are threatned with a downfall (*Psal:* 18. 27.) *The Lord will bring downe high lookes*, that is, *proud men who looke highly.* And againe (*Isa:* 2. 11.) *The lofty lookes of man shall be humbled, and the haughtinesse of man shall be bowed downe.* Once more saith the Lord (*Isa:* 10. 13.) *I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the King of Assyria, and the glory of his high lookes.* There we have pride in the roote, *a stout heart*, and pride in the fruit, *high lookes.* (*Isa:* 3. 11.) *The shew of their Countenance testifieth against them*; that is, they look proudly, though (which should lay them in the dust) they live very lewdly, yea they are proud of their lewdnesse.

Thirdly, How often doth pride bud in apparell, in vaine fashions, and new-fangled attires, in the affected adornings and trimmings of a body of clay? What are these but the buddings of pride? yea the flaggs and banners of pride. Some are as proud of their gay dresses, as the Peacock of his feathers. We commonly say, *Fine feathers make fine birds*, but how foolish are those birds that are proud of Feathers!

Secondly, There is pride of heart, or pride budding in the spirit of man, which doth not shew it selfe; only the mind swels within. When men have high thoughts of themselves (though they doe not (as the Apostle *Jude* hath it) speake great swelling words of vanity, yet they have great swelling thoughts of vanity, then pride buddeth in their spirits, their minds swell, and the mind will swell more then the tongue. The tongue swells mightily, but the heart much more. The spirit of a man may lift up it selfe on high, when the man looks very demurely. (*Hab:* 2.4.) *Behold, his soule which is lifted up, is not upright in him*; If the soule be lifted up, the man falls; He that is high-minded, cannot be upright in his minde.

It may be questioned, Whence it cometh to passe, that the soule of man is so much and so often lifted up with pride? What causeth this swelling and heaving of his spirit? I answer,

Firſt, Some are proud of their birth, either, that they are borne of great men, or that they are borne of good men. The Baptiſt admoniſhed the *Jewes* of this piece of pride (*Math:* 3. 19.) *Thinke not to ſay within your ſelves, we have Abraham to our father.* As if he had ſayd, I well perceive what makes you (as we ſpeake proverbially) ſtand ſo much upon your pantafloes? and talk within your ſelves, at ſuch a rate of your ſelves, is it not becauſe you are of *Abrahams* ſtock? But I ſay unto you, let not your heart ſwell with theſe thoughts, *we are Children of Abraham; for God is able even of theſe ſtones to raiſe up children to Abraham*; that is, God will not want a people, though he ſhould lay you aſide, and entertaine you no longer for his people.

Secondly, Others are proud of riches, yea they *boaſt of the multitude of their riches* (Pſal: 49. 6.) Even they who deſire to hide their riches as much as they can, yet cannot but tell the world they are proud of their riches, ſo proud, that they ſlight and contemne all men that have not as much riches as they; O what rejoycings have moſt rich men over their riches? *Hezekiah* a great King and a Good man (a rare conjunction) had much of that upon his ſpirit (*Iſa:* 39. 2.) when Ambaſſadours came from *Babylon*, *He was glad of them, and ſhewed them all his treaſure*; He affected they ſhould ſee what a rich King he was, and what maſſes of Gold and ſilver as well as what multitudes of men were at his command.

Thirdly, Many are proud of their honours and powers in the world; They are high-minded, becauſe they are ſet in high places; 'Tis a diſhonour to ſome great men that they have not truelygreat ſpirits. And 'tis the temptation of all great men to have proud ſpirits.

Fourthly, Not a few are proud of their bodyly perfections and ſtrength: many a ſoule is defiled and deformed with pride by the bodyes beauty and faireneſſe; many look not after the beauty of holineſſe, while they doat upon the beauty of their owne comelineſſe; they ſee themſelves in their beauty, till they are proud of it, and care not (which ſhould be our greateſt care, and ſhall be our greateſt priviledge, *Iſa:* 33. 17.) *to ſee the King in his beauty.* As ſome truſt in their ſpirituall beauty (*Ezek:* 16. 15.) ſo others over-weene their corporall, both are the effects of pride; and the firſt is by ſo much the worſe of the two, by how much it riſeth from a better object. Fifthly,

Fifthly, Many are proud of their naturall parts, proud of their gifts, proud of their wit, proud of their memory, proud of their eloquence and abilities of ſpeaking. As *knowledge it ſelfe puffeth up* (1 Cor: 8. 1.) ſo doe all thoſe endowments which ſerve either for the getting or expreſſing of our knowledge. Gifts and abilities, whether naturall or improved and acquired, doe not more fit us for ſervice, then tempt us to and (unleſſe grace worke mightily) taint us with pride.

Sixthly, As many are proud of what they have, ſo others are proud of what they have done, they are proud of their actions, their ſpirits ſwell with the thoughts of their owne workes. Some are ſo wicked, that they are proud of their evill workes. The Apoſtle ſaith, *They glory in their ſhame* (Phil: 3. 19.) *David* complain'd of many (*Pſal:* 4.) who *turned his glory into ſhame*; but theſe turne their ſhame into glory, that is, they are proud of that for which they ought to be aſhamed. Now if ſome are proud of the evill, of the miſchief which they have done, how eaſily may we grow proud of the good which we have done? proud of our duties, proud of our righteous deeds, proud of our charitable deeds to men, proud of our prayers to God, proud of our zeale for God, as *Jehu* was who ſayd, *Come and ſee my zeale for the Lord.* The heart of a good man may ſoone have too much to doe with what he hath done, his thoughts may quickly worke too much towards and upon his owne workes. But as for hypocrites and ſelfe-ſeekers, who doe good to be ſeene of men, they cannot forbeare ſeeing it themſelves, and ſurely that ſight of the eye cannot but affect the heart with pride.

Seventhly, Pride riſeth often from the ſucceſſe of what is attempted and done, men are proud of victories. The *Aſſyrian* is deſcribed (*Iſa:* 10. 13, 14.) triumphing and inſulting, becauſe *he had put downe the nations as a valiant man.* And (*Hab:* 1. 16.) we have the *Chaldeans ſacrificing to their net, and burning incenſe to their drage, becauſe by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous*; that is, they boaſted of and gloried in their great atchievements in warre; ſo it ſeemes to be explained in the next words (*v.* 17.) *Shall they therefore empty their net, and not ſpare continually to ſlay the nations?*

Eighthly, Pride ſpringeth out of the very mercies and ſalvation of God. Thus 'tis ſayd of *Hezekiah* (2 Chron: 32. 25.) after

after he had received two great mercies; First, deliverance from a great enemy; and, Secondly, from a great sicknesse; *He rendred not againe according to the benefit done unto him, for his heart was lifted up.* How lifted up? not in thankfulnesse, for he rendred not according to the kindnesse, but in pride and high-mindednesse; for presently it is said (*v. 26.*) *Notwithstanding Hezekiah humbled himselfe for the pride of his heart.*

Ninthly, The heart is lifted up and waxeth proud with Church-Priviledges; Some say, they are in the Church, or they are the Church; they enjoy pure ordinances and administrations of holy worship above others. For this kind of pride the Prophet reproved the *Jewes* (Jer: 7. 3, 4.) *Heare ye the word of the Lord, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the Lord,* &c. *Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we; The temple of the Lord are these;* As if he had sayd, Be not proud of the Temple (what we trust to, besides God, we are proud of) nor of your Temple priviledges, you will find no sanctuary, no security there, unlesse you amend your wayes; these things will doe you no good, except you be better. The *Jewes* were taxed also by the Apostle for such a proud cry (*Rom: 2. 17.*) *Thou makest thy boast of God*; and can a man doe better then to boast of God? but they swell'd with pride, they did not rejoyce with thankfulnesse, they contemn'd others, as if God were a God to them only, and saw somewhat in them above others, as the reason why he chose them for his people above others. This was pride of spirit, or spirituall pride. And againe to the *Jew* (v. 22.) *Thou that makest thy boast of the Law*; And is it not our duty to boast of the law or word of God? But the Apostle saw them proud of the Law, not obedient to it; He perceived their hearts were lifted up in their priviledge of having the letter of the Law, while both their hearts and lives were unconformed and unsubdued to the spirituallnesse of the Law.

Tenthly, Pride is ready to rise in the heart of man from that divine light & those extraordinary Revelations which he receives from God; and it is hard to keep the heart under when God discovers very much of himselfe to man. This was *Pauls* case (*2 Cor: 12. 7.*) *Lest I should be lifted up above measure through the aboundance of revelations, there was given me a thorne in the flesh,*

flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me. Even *Paul* in that case needed a thorne in his flesh to let out or prevent the Impostumation of his spirit. Some conceive the reason why the Prophet *Ezekiel* is so often called, *Son of Man*, was to keepe him humble, while he had many revelations from God.

Eleventhly, Some have been proud not only of divine and heavenly, but of diabolicall and hellish Revelations. We read of one *Theudas boasting himselfe to be some body* (Acts 5. 36.) This vaine man pretended revelations from God, which were indeed from the Devill; And he swell'd with this conceit, boasted himselfe to be *some body*, that is, he thought himselfe to be *every body*; as if the perfections of all men were Center'd in him, or as if all others were *no body*, and he himselfe the only *some body*. The Apostle (*Acts 8. 9.*) speaking of *Symon*, who had used sorcery and bewitched the people of *Samaria*, saith, *He gave out that himselfe was some great one*; he swell'd with pride from his diabolicall Revelations; giving out not only (as *Theudas*) that he was *some body*, but that he was *some great one*. Though indeed for a man to report himselfe *some body*, is (as both learned Grecians and Latines noted in the Margin tell us) to report himselfe a Great one. And who are greater in pride, then they who make Great reports of themselves, or report themselves great?

λέγων εἶναι τινα ἑαυτὸν μεγαντις idem atq; μέγας. *Hinc illud pindari,* τὶ δὲ τὶς τὶ δὲ οὔ τις. *Quid est Aliquis?* i. e. *qui se putat esse aliquam.* σκιας ὄναρ ἄνθρωπος. *Umbræ somnium homo Hinc illud. Est filius alicujus.* i. e. *egregij viri, non è media turba aut terræ filius. Et illud. Fac ut me velis esse aliquem.* Cic: Lib 3. ad Atticum Epist: 52.

How great a proneness there is in the heart of man to pride, may appeare by all these instances; by which it appeares that as there is much pride abiding in man, so by all or any of these occasions it is dayly budding out, unlesse God hide it from man, and nip it in the bud.

Yet here it may be questioned; Whence it cometh to passe, that man is so prone to pride? or what is the spring of it?

I answer; First, Pride springs from Inordinate selfe-love, (*2 Tim: 3. 2.*) *Men shall be lovers of their own selves, Covetous, Boasters, Proud.* They that are undue lovers of themselves, or in love with themselves, they presently grow proud of themselves. Selfe-love, and selfe-flattery, are glasses in which if a man look upon himselfe, he appears double to what he is, or much greater then what he really is. Selfe-love is a *multiplying*, yea and a *magnifying glasse*. 'Tis dangerous to see our selves through our owne selfe-love; That sight of selfe affects the heart with high

high thoughts of selfe, which high thoughts the Lord would have all men cast downe, or cast away, while he gives that admonition by his Apostle to the *Romans* (*Rom:* 12. 3.) *Let no man thinke of himselfe more highly then he ought to thinke* (that is, let him not thinke highly of himselfe at all) but (as it followeth in the same verse) *Soberly, or to sobriety*. For indeed many are drunken, yea mad, or mad-drunke with high, that is, proud thoughts of themselves. Hence that of the same Apostle (*Gal:* 6. 3.) *If a man think himselfe to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himselfe*; he that thinks himselfe to be something, is he that hath proud thoughts of himselfe; and such a *something*, is a meere *nothing*, that is, is no such thing as he thinks himselfe to be; as is cleare in the case of the Church of *Laodicea* (Rev: 3.16.) Hence

Secondly, Pride springs from an opinion that what we have is better then indeed it is; the proud man thinks all his silver gold, and his brass silver. We speak proverbially of such, *All their geese are swans*; they alwayes over-rate their own commodities.

Thirdly, Pride springs from this false opinion, that what we have, we have it from our selves, or that 'tis of our own getting. The Apostles Pride-confounding question, is, (1 *Cor:* 4. 7.) *What hast thou that thou hast not received?* As if he had sayd, the true reason why men boast, or the ground of all their proud boasting is this, they think not themselves beholding to any for what they have; all is of themselves, or by a selfe-improvement; they have somewhat (they imagine) which they have not received.

Fourthly, The proud man thinkes what he hath, he alone hath it; at least, that he hath it in a greater measure then any other. He is the Cedar, others are but shrubs. He is the Giant, others are but dwarfes. Only the humble attaine that rule (*Rom:* 12. 10.) *In honour preferring one another*: as also that (*Phil:* 2. 3.) *In lowlinesse of mind, let each esteeme other better then himselfe.*

Fifthly, Pride riseth from this thought, that what we have, we shall alwayes have. Holy *David* began to be blowne up with pride, as soone as ever *he sayd in his prosperity, I shall never be moved. Babylon glorified her selfe, having sayd in her heart, I sit a Queene, and am no widdow, and shall see no sorrow*, (Revel: 18. 7.)

Secondly,

Secondly, In that God is here sayd *to hide pride from man*;

Observe.

Pride is a very vile and most odious sin.

If God hide it from mans eyes, then surely God himselfe is of purer eyes then to behold it, and be pleased. (*Psal.* 138. 6.) *The Lord knoweth the proud afar off*; He that meets a spectacle or person which he cannot endure to look upon, avoydes it, or turnes from it while he is yet afar off; whereas if the object be delightfull, he draweth neer, and comes as close as he can; when therefore 'tis sayd, *the Lord knoweth a proud man afar off*, it shews his disdaine of him, *He will scarce touch him with a paire of tongs*, (as we say) he cannot abide to come neere him. He knows well enough how vile he is even at the greatest distance. Pride is the first of those seven *things which are an abomination to the Lord*, (*Prov:* 6. 17.) And how abominable a thing pride is, may appeare further by these six Considerations.

First, The folly and Irrationallity of pride, renders it odious to God; nothing is more odious to a wise man then folly, how odious then is pride to the most wise God! When *Paul* did any thing which had but a shew of pride in it, though he did it only upon Constraint, yet he calls himselfe foole for doing it (2 *Cor:* 12. 11.) *I am become a foole in glorying, ye have compelled me.* Doth not this intimate, that in *Pauls* opinion, all proud selfe-gloriers and boasters are fooles, that is, such as act below common sense or reason. In the Hebrew language, the same word that signifies boasting and pride, signifies folly and foolishnesse. The empty vessell yeilds the greatest sound; and they that make so great a noise of themselves, are usually nothing else but a Great noyse themselves, at least they unavoydably raise a suspition of themselves, that they are but empty vessells, or shallow rivers. This was *Solomons* conclusion (*Pro:* 25. 27.) *For men to search their owne glory is no glory*; that is, a man obscures himselfe by selfe-glorying. How foolish, how irrationall a thing is it for any man to glory proudly, when as by doing so he obscures that which is the chiefest glory of man as man, his reason; and seemes to put himselfe to the question, whether he be a reasonable creature yea or no.

Secondly, Pride is more abominable, because it is not only

the folly of man, but a robbery of God; nothing robs God of his honour ſo much as pride. It is ſaid of Jeſus Chriſt (*Phil:* 2. 6.) *He thought it no robbery to be equall with God*; He did not wrong God in making himſelfe his equall, himſelfe being God. But if men will match themſelves with God, or are lifted up in their ſpirits, (as proud men are beyond the line of man) this is a robbery of God. Whatſoever we take to our ſelves more then is due, we take from God, yea we ſteale from God. They who forget God the author and fountaine of all they have, and take glory to themſelves, commit the worſt kind of robbery, and are the moſt dangerous Theeves. (*Iſa:* 42. 8.) *My glory will I not give to another*; therefore if any take glory to themſelves (as (I ſay againe) all proud men doe) 'tis ſtealing, and 'tis not only (as I may ſay) picking of his pocket, but the breaking open of his Treaſury, of his Cabinet, to carry away the chief Jewel of his Crowne, ſo is *his glory* (Rom: 11. 36.) *All is from him, therefore all muſt be to him*; all is from the father of light, therefore what light, what gifts, what ſtrength ſoever we have, it muſt returne to him in prayſes, and in the glorifying of his name; we may not deck or adorne our own name with it, nor put our name upon it? How much ſoever we have we have received, it is from the Lord; therefore 'tis extreamly ſinfull and ſacrilegious to take or keepe it to our ſelves. And as whatſoever good we have we have it of God, ſo whatſoever good we have done, we have had light and ſtrength from God to doe it; naturall yea ſpirituall ſtrength, not only the firſt power of acting, but all ſubſequent actings of that power are from God; therefore to have ſecret liftings up of ſpirit, in our owne actings, is to rob God (*Pſal:* 51. 15.) *Open thou my lips, and my mouth ſhall ſhew forth thy praiſe*, ſayd *David*; As if he had ſayd, Lord if thou wilt open my lips, and help me to ſpeak as I ought, I will not ſhew forth my owne praiſe, nor boaſt of what I have either ſpoken or done, but I will ſhew forth thy praiſe; becauſe the opening of the lips is from thee.

Thirdly, It is an abomination to be proud; for whatſoever any man hath done, or how good ſoever any man is, he is no better then he ſhould be, and hath done no more then was his duty to doe; he hath done but his duty to God, and his duty to man, when he hath done his beſt, he hath done no more; every man is bound

bound to doe the good that he doth, how much ſoever it be that he doth; therefore it is both an ignoble and an abominable thing for any man to boaſt of what he hath done.

Fourthly, Is it abominable to boaſt of what we have done, ſeeing how much ſoever we have done, it will appeare upon a right and due account, that we have done leſſe then we ought, and are much ſhort of our duty, (*Luke* 17. 10.) *When ye ſhall have done all thoſe things which are commanded you, ſay, we are unprofitable ſervants, and have done but that which was our duty to doe.* We can doe nothing but what is our duty, but all we doe is not the one halfe of our whole duty, and ſhall we glory as if we had obliged God by doing more then all!

Fifthly, It is an odious thing for any man to be proud of what he hath done, for God might have done it by another if he pleaſed. No man is neceſſary to God, as if his worke could not be done unleſſe ſuch a one doe it. He hath choyce of inſtruments, and is able to fit thoſe for his buſineſſe who are moſt unfit of themſelves. It is matter of thankfulneſſe that God will call and uſe us to doe him any ſervice, and enable us to doe it; God could have put his talent into another mans hand; the riches, the power, the wiſdome, the learning, the parts which thou actſt by, he could have put it into other hands; he can make the dumb to ſpeak, as well as the greateſt ſpeaker; He can make an Ideot, a Dunce, knowing and learned, as well as the moſt knowing among the learned. Therefore the learned, the eloquent, have no reaſon to be proud, but much to be thankfull; He can make the weakeſt to doe as much as the ſtrongeſt; therefore the ſtrongeſt have no reaſon to be proud, but much to be thankfull; He can raiſe Children to *Abraham* out of the ſtones of the ſtreet; therefore the *Jewes* muſt not be proud, or thinke that God is beholding to them for being his people; *He can ordaine ſtrength and his owne praiſe out of the mouthes of babes and ſucklings* (Pſal: 8. 2. Math: 21. 16.) therefore the wiſe and prudent have no reaſon to be proud, but much to be thankfull. O remember, It is of Gods vouchſafement not of our deſert, that we are admitted to his ſervice.

Laſtly, Pride muſt needs be an odious thing, and that which God greatly abhorr's, becauſe it quite croſſeth the deſigne of God in the Goſpel; which is to keep the creature humble and

low, that he himſelfe alone may be exalted; *He will not beare it that any fleſh ſhould glory in his preſence*; *He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord* (1 Cor: 1. 29, 31.) God will have his end upon all fleſh, and therefore he will dreadfully glorifie himſelfe upon thoſe, who proudly glory in themſelves.

Further, The word by which man is expreſſed, from whom God hides pride ſignifying (as was ſhewed) *a ſtrong mighty man*, the moſt accompliſhed and beſt furniſhed man.

Obſerve, Thirdly.

Great men, wiſe men, rich men, are very ſubject to and often carried away by pride.

God therefore hides pride from them, becauſe they lie ſo open to the aſſaults of pride; our riſing is oftentimes an occaſion of our falling. And that which God gives man for his good, proves (by reaſon of this corruption moſtly) his ſnare. One of the Ancients ſpeaking of Pride, ſaith 'tis the greateſt ſin for foure reaſons.

Firſt, In the antiquity of it, becauſe it was the firſt ſin, the Devill's ſin, before man ſinned; that ſin which he firſt dropt into man to make him fall, was the ſin by which himſelfe fell; he would be higher, and more then he was, and he provoked man to be ſo too. 'Tis diſputed what was the original of original ſin, and the doubt lyeth between two, whether unbeliefe or pride had the precedency in mans fall, (a queſtion much like that, whether faith or repentance hath the precedency in his riſing) I ſhall only ſtate it thus; that which appear'd firſt was unbeliefe; the woman put a peradventure upon the threatning of God in caſe of eating the forbidden fruit. But certainly pride was Contemporary with unbeliefe; man would needs lift up himſelfe beyond the ſtate he had, and ſo fell from and loſt that eſtate.

Secondly, Saith he, Pride is productive of many other ſins, 'tis a fountaine ſin, a root ſin, it nouriſheth, nurſeth, and bringeth up many other ſins; no man knoweth what ſin may be next when pride is firſt.

Thirdly, The greatneſs of the ſin of pride may be argued from the over-ſpreading of it; pride hath infected many mortally; and who can ſay his heart is free from this plague, though poſſibly it be not the plague (or ſpeciall maſter ſin) of his heart?

Pride

Pride is an Epidemicall diſeaſe, all labour under this ſickneſſe, and this ſickneſſe hath got the maſtery over many.

His fourth reaſon is that of the text and poynt; Pride is a great wickedneſſe, becauſe uſually it infects great men. They that are great in power, great in gifts, great in learning, great in any thing, are ſure to be aſſaulted if not blemiſhed and blaſted with this ſin, inſomuch that it had been better for many to have been fools, then learned, low then high, meane then great, poore then rich in this world. There is a temptation in power, in greatneſs, in riches, in knowledge, in gifts, in the beſt things, to make the mind ſwell, and the man that is ſtored with them proud. Pride is (as I may ſay) of a very high extraction, it was conceived in and borne by the now Apoſtate Angels, whoſe place, *firſt eſtate* (*or principality*, as we put in the Margin of the Epiſtle of *Jude* *v. 6.*) was aloft in heaven. Angels were the neereſt ſervants and attendants upon God himſelfe, who calleth heaven *the habitation of his holineſſe, and of his glory*; And ſurely the habitation which the Apoſtle *Jude* in the ſame verſe ſaith the Angels *left*, (and he calls it *their owne*, that is, that which was allotted and allowed them by God as their portion, this habitation, I ſay,) muſt needs be a very high and excellent one, as themſelves by nature were in the higheſt claſſis or forme of creatures. Now as pride began from and had its birth in theſe nigh and noble ſpirits (which gave one occaſion (though it be as helliſh a luſt as any in hell) to call it Heavenly by Nation) ſo the higher men are (who at higheſt are but duſt) the more doth pride haunt them, and inſinuate it ſelfe to get a dwelling or ſeate in them, as the moſt proper and congeniall ſubjects which it can find here on earth it ſelfe, with thoſe of whom it firſt tooke poſſeſſion and whom it made its firſt habitation, being for ever caſt downe from heaven. Pride having once dwelt in thoſe who were ſo high, loves ſtill to dwell or take up its lodging (at leaſt) in thoſe, who upon any reference whether to naturall, civill, or ſpirituall things, are called and reputed *Higheſt*.

Quia nationes cæleſtis ſublimium animos inhabitat. Hugo.

Obſerve, Fourthly.

God by various meanes, even by all ſorts of meanes, gives check to the pride of man, he ſpeaketh once, yea twice to man in a dreame, in a viſion of the night, that he may hide pride from man.

Pride

Pride is a ſin which God proſecutes both night and day; if ſpeaking by day doth not mortifie it, ſpeaking in the night by dreams ſhall. *Nebuchadnezzar* was full of pride, and God humbled him by a dream, and brought downe the haughtineſſe of his heart by a viſion of the night. This great Monarch of the world was ſo full of pride that he boaſted it out (*Dan:* 4. 30.) *Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the houſe of the kingdome, and by the might of my power, and for the honour of my Majeſty?* Now while he ſpake thus walking in the Palace of the kingdome of *Babylon*, *there fell a voyce from heaven, ſaying, O King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is ſpoken, The kingdome is departed from thee*, &c. *And they ſhall drive thee from among men, And thy dwelling* (who haſt thought thy ſelfe more then man) *ſhall be with the beaſts of the field.* The effect of this voyce *Nebuchadnezzar* had in a dreame, as appeares by *Daniels* interpretation of it in the former part of the Chapter. God ſhewed him in that dreame what his condition ſhould be, and he executed it upon him to the full, to pull downe his pride; That, *he at laſt might know that the moſt High ruleth the Kingdomes of men, and giveth them to whomſoever he will.* Whereas then he thought that he alone ruled the world, and could give kingdomes to whom he would. How wonderfully did God oppoſe the pride of *Pauls* ſpirit, he could not favour pride, no not in that eminent Apoſtle, *Leſt through the abundance of revelations he ſhould be exalted above meaſure, there was given him a thorne in the fleſh, the meſſenger of Satan to buffet him*, (2 Cor: 12. 7.) that is, God uſed extraordinary means to humble him. As here God is ſaid to humble by viſions, ſo there *Paul* being endanger'd to pride by receiving viſions, God found a ſtrange way to humble him, even by the buffetings of the meſſenger of Satan, who is the Prince of pride, and as (God ſpeaketh of the Leviathan at the 42d Chapter of this booke, *v.* 34.) *a king over all the children of pride.* God doth ſo much reſiſt pride, that he cannot but *reſiſt the proud* (*James* 4. 6.) and *ſcorne the ſcorners*, (Pro: 3. 34.) yea he hath told us of a day (*Iſa:* 2. 11.) wherein *the lofty lookes of man ſhall be humbled, and the haughtineſs of men ſhall be bowed downe: and the Lord alone ſhall be exalted in that day.*

There are foure ſpeciall pride-ſubduing Conſiderations.

First, They who are proud of what they have, are like to have no more. When the Apoſtle had ſayd (*James* 4. 6.) *He reſiſteth the proud* (he preſently adds) *but giveth more grace to the humble.* As if he had ſayd, Though the Lord hath given proud men much (for 'tis ſome gift of God, and uſually a great one of which men grow proud) yet he will now ſtop his hand and give them no more. The Lord gives to them who are humble and praiſe him, not to thoſe who are proud and praiſe themſelves.

Secondly, Not only doth the Lord ſtop his hand from giving more to thoſe who are proud, but often makes an act of revocation and takes away that which he hath already given. As he who Idly puts his talent into a napkin, ſo he who vainely and vain-gloriouſly ſhews it, is in danger of having it taken away from him. *It is as ſinfull to ſhew our talent proudly, as to hide it negligently. Nebuchadnezzar* boaſted proudly of his kingdome, and preſently it was ſayd to him, *The kingdome is departed from thee. Hezekiah* boaſted of his treaſure (*Iſa:* 39. 6.) and by and by the Lord told him, his treaſure ſhould be taken away, (though not immediately from him, yet from his poſterity) and carried to *Babylon.* 'Tis ſo in ſpiritualls, when we proudly ſhew our treaſure, the treaſures of our knowledge, or other gifts and attainments, the Lord many times, in judgement, ſends them into captivity, takes them from us, and ſtrips us naked of that cloathing and adorning whereof we are proud.

Thirdly, If God doth not take all away, yet what remaines is withered and blaſted, it dries up and comes to little; if it be not quite removed, yet it appeares no more in its former beauty and luſter. When *God with rebukes correcteth man for* (*this*) *iniquity, he maketh his beauty* (the beauty of his parts and gifts, yea of his graces) *to conſume away* (as *David* expreſſeth it, *Pſal:* 39. 11.) *like a moth.* O what a dryneſs, and ſo a decayedneſs falls upon that ſoule from whom the ſoaking dewes and drops, the ſweete influences of heaven are reſtrained! And ſurely if they are reſtrained from any, they are from proud men; No marvaile then, if others ſee and they feele their witherings, and even ſenſible declinings every day.

Fourthly, Suppoſe the gifts and parts of a proud man continue florid and appeare ſtil acting in their former ſtrength, vigour, and beauty, yet God ſends a ſecret curſe upon them, and though he doth not wither them, yet he doth not delight in them, nor give

give them any acceptation. The best things how long soever continued to proud men, are no longer blessings to them; yea it had been good for them, that either they had never had them, or that they had been soone taken away. That as one sayd falsely of the life of man in generall, but truely of wicked men; *It had been best for them not to have been borne, and their next best would be to dye quickly.* So I may say in this case of proud men; It had been best for them they never had received any eminent gifts from God, and their next best would be to have them quickly taken away; For as wicked men in General (if they dye unconverted) the longer they live, the worser they live, and every day by adding new heapes of sin, heape up further wrath against the day of wrath; So proud men in speciall, the longer they have and hold their gifts, their riches, their honours, their powers, doe but abuse them the more, to the increase of their sin here, and (without repentance) shame hereafter.

Optimum est non nasci pro secundum cito mori.

And therefore to shut up this observation, and the exposition of this verse, I shall only give some few directions or counsels for the cure of this soule-sickness pride, or for the pricking of a pride-swolne heart, that so the winde, that noxious winde of ostentation, by which proud men are vainely puft up in their fleshly mindes, may be let out and voyded.

First, Let the proud man consider what he is; Some have asked blasphemously, *What is the Almighty?* as we saw at the 21th Chapter of this Booke: But it may well enough be asked, *What is man that the Almighty should be mindfull of him* (Psal: 144. 3, 4.) and may we not much more question againe, *What is man that he should be so mindfull of himselfe? David*, a great king said to the Lord (2 *Sam:* 7. 18.) *Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?* Thus every man should say to himselfe, or put the question to his owne soule; *Who am I? or what am I*, that I should have a proud thought? All men indeed differ in some things, and some differ in very many things. Men of high degree, and men of low degree differ, men of knowledge and ignorance differ, learned and unlearned men differ. And it is not only, as I may say, a peice of heraldry, but a peice of divinity to keep up the differences of men. Yet what is any man, whether high or low, knowing or ignorant, learned or unlearned, that he should be proud? they all agree in this, they

they are all dust and ashes, they are all but as a shaddow, or a vapour, they are all as grasse, or as a flower of the field, and at their best estate (in the very hight of their excellency) they are altogether vanity. How much soever men differ in other things, yet in this they all agree, or are all alike in this, they are all vanity. Then what is man that he should be proud? shall dust and ashes, shall a passing shaddow, or a disappearing vapour, shall withering grasse, or fading flowers, shall vanity it selfe be proud? The best of men at their best, are the worst of all these, why then should any man be proud? Yea I may put the question further, *How can any man be proud, who knoweth what man is?* and acknowledgeth himselfe to be but a man. I will adde yet further in this questioning way, How can any man be proud who knoweth himselfe to be (which is a more humbling consideration, then any of or then all the former) a sinfull man! We ought alwayes to behumbled for sin, and shall we who are at all times sinning, be proud at any time?

Secondly, To cure pride of spirit, Consider what ever man is (as to this world) he cannot be long what he is. He that is high in the world, cannot be long in his worldly heights. He that is rich in the world, cannot long enjoy his worldly riches; yea knowledge vanisheth; all such kinde of knowledge, learning and skill as men now have, is a meere vanishing thing; man, in his highest perfections, is very mutable, and the higher he is, the more mutable he is; what hath he then to be proud of? We have some changes every day, and when a few dayes are past, we shall come to our great change; our change by death is but a few dayes off, for the utmost of our dayes are but few. As man is not to be accounted of by others, so not by himselfe, *because his breath is in his nostrills*, and he may quickly perish (*Isa:* 2. 22.) Shall perishing things be proud things? Shall they be lifted up with what they have, who (as to this world) have so little being, that they can scarcely be sayd to be. By this argument all men are called off from trusting those that are highest in this world (*Psal:* 146. 3.) *Their breath goeth forth.* And we have the same argument, not to be high in our owne thoughts, because our breath goeth forth, and there is an end of us.

Thirdly, Consider all those things which are as fewel and occasions of pride in man, even for those man must shortly give an

account. And ſurely he who remembers that whatſoever he hath, be it riches, ſtrength, honour, parts, knowledge, or learning, he muſt come to a reckoning for it, that man will not over-reckon himſelfe ſo much for it, as to be proud of it. The Apoſtle concludes, *So then every man muſt give an account of himſelfe to God*, (*Rom:* 14. 12.) That is, of all his receits, and of all his expences, what hath been beſtowed upon him, and how he hath improved what hath been beſtowed. He muſt give an account of himſelfe in his naturall capacity as a man; and he muſt give account of himſelfe in his civill capacity, as a rich or great man; and he muſt give account of himſelfe in his ſpirituall capacity, as he hath enjoyed meanes to make him gracious, or to grow in grace. He muſt give an account of himſelfe about all the good things he hath received, what good he hath done with them, either to himſelfe or others. He that is ſerious upon ſuch a meditation as this, ſhall finde two effects of it; Firſt, it will keep him very buſie, and free him from Idleneſſe; Secondly, it will keep him very humble and free him from pride. Who can glory vainely in his Stewardſhip (for all we have is put into our hands as Stewards, who, I ſay, can glory vainely in his Stewardſhip) that alwayes heares this voyce ſounding in his ears, *Come give an account of thy ſtewardſhip, for thou mayeſt be no longer Steward.* O how ill an account will they make when they are asked, what they have done with their riches? who muſt anſwer, *We have been proud of them*; who being asked, what have you done with your honour, muſt anſwer, *we have been proud of it*; who being asked, what have you done with your knowledge? muſt anſwer, *we have been proud of it.* Theſe will be ſad anſwers in the day of account, yet proud men (whatſoever they have done with their receits) muſt make this anſwer, what other anſwer ſoever they make.

Fourthly, Conſider that the more any one hath received (and it is the degree upon which pride riſeth the more, I ſay the more any one hath received) in any kinde whatſoever, the ſtricter will his account be; for the account will be proportionable to what the receipt is. (*Luke* 12. 48.) *To whom ſoever much is given, of him ſhall be much required, and to whom men have committed much, of him they will aske the more*; where much is ſowne, there God looks to reap much. He looketh not only for improving, but for ſutable, for proportionable improvement. If he that had received

received five talents (*Math:* 25.) had brought only two talents more, and ſo made his five ſeven, this had not been proportionable; or if he that had received two, had made them three, this had not been proportionable; but he that received five, brought ten; and he that received two, brought foure; This account was proportionable to the receipt; and therefore to theſe their Lord ſayd, *Well done good and faithfull ſervants.* God looks for doubling, (as I may ſay) that we ſhould make his five ten, his two foure. Therefore why ſhould any man be proud of what he hath received, ſeeing the more he hath received, the more great and ſtricter will his account be.

Fifthly, That pride may be cured and hid from your eyes, I adviſe, That *in the midſt of your fullneſs, you would think of your emptineſs, and in the midſt of your perfections, of your deficiencies*; think how much, and in how many things you are wanting, when any thought of pride ariſeth concerning what you enjoy, or wherein you abound. He that thinks how much he is wanting, will not be proud how much ſoever he aboundeth; and indeed our wantings being a great deale more then our aboundings, and our imperfections then our perfections, ſhould be to us greater matter of humbling, then our abounding or perfections can be an occaſion of pride. To cleare this further, Conſider your deficiencies two wayes; Firſt, in your ſelves; conſider how low you are in knowledge, how low in grace, how low in duty; remember that there is a great deale of darkneſs in the beſt of your light, a great deale of water in the beſt of your wine, and a great deale of droſs in the pureſt of your ſilver; remember theſe weaknesſes in your ſelves, and then ſay as bleſſed *Paul* (*Phil:* 5. 22.) *I count not that I have already attained*; that is, that I have attained perfection, I am very much behinde, very much below my duty, I am below what I might be and have attained to, both in the light of knowledge, and in the ſtrength of grace. I am below what I might be attained to, both as to zeale for, and as to faith in God. O how many are our deficiencies when we have profited moſt! Secondly, Conſider your deficiencies in reference to others; The Apoſtle ſaith (2 *Cor:* 10. 12.) *They who compare themſelves with themſelves are not wiſe.* The reaſon why many think themſelves over-wiſe, is, becauſe they do not (as they ought) compare themſelves with others, or if they compare themſelves with others,

they compare themſelves only with thoſe that are below, not with thoſe who are above themſelves. They who compare themſelves with themſelves, or with thoſe only who are below themſelves, are not wiſe, though they think themſelves very wiſe. If we would compare our ſelves with other men, who are above us, it would mightily keep down the pride of our ſpirits; for who is there but might ſee more in ſome, yea in many others then in himſelfe? Now, as it is an excellent means to keep the ſoule from murmuring and diſcontent, to conſider that many others are below us; ſo it is an excellent means to keep us from pride, to conſider that many others are above us; ſo much above us, that our knowledge is but ignorance to their knowledge, our ſtrength weakneſſe, our faith unbeliefe, our patience unquietneſſe of ſpirit, our very fruitfullneſſe barrenneſſe compared with theirs; or to ſpeak alluſively, that our fat kine are but leane to the fat ones of others, and our full ears but withered looked upon with their full eares. And as it is a good meanes to keepe the ſoule humble or to cure it of pride, to compare our ſelves with men who are much above us, ſo eſpecially, if we would but remember how much God is above us, in compariſon of whom all our fullneſs is indeed emptineſs, our ſtrength weakneſſe, our riches poverty, and our light darkneſs. And therefore when *Job* (Chap: 42.) began to compare himſelfe with God, and to ſet God before him, then he was in the duſt preſently; though he ſpake over-valuingly of himſelfe ſometime, yet when once he came to ſet himſelfe before God, then ſaith he, *I have ſpoken once, but I will ſpeak no more; I abhorre my ſelfe, and repent in duſt and aſhes.* And when the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſaw the Lord in his Glory, and compared himſelfe with him, he cryed out, *I am undone, I am a man of poluted lips*; all his graces, and all his gifts vaniſhed into nothing, when he conſidered the Lord before whom he ſtood. Thus we may keepe downe pride by conſidering our deficiencies, and comparing our ſelves with others who are above us, eſpecially by comparing our ſelves with God, to whom we are not ſo much as a drop of the bucket to the whole Ocean, nor the duſt of the ballance to the body of the whole earth.

Sixthly, For the hideing and keeping downe of pride, often reflect upon your own ſinfulneſſe; our defects in good may keepe our hearts low, but our abundance of ſinfull evills may keepe them

them much lower. While we conſider ſin in a two-fold notion, how ſhould it humble us? Firſt, as dwelling or abiding in us; Secondly, as acted and brought forth by us in either of theſe wayes; look on ſin, and the heart muſt needs come downe; thus poyſon may expell poyſon, the remembrance of ſin abiding in us and acted by us, may be a ſtop to the further acting, as of all other ſins, ſo eſpecially of this ſin, pride.

Seventhly, Let us be much in the meditation of Chriſt humbling and abaſing himſelfe for us. What can kill pride, if the humblings of Chriſt doe not? O how may we ſchoole and catechiſe our proud ſoules with the remembrances of Chriſt in his abaſements! What! an humble Chriſt, and a proud Chriſtian! an humble Maſter, and a proud Diſciple! did Chriſt empty himſelfe and make himſelfe of no reputation, and ſhall we who are but emptineſſe be lifted up with a reputation of our ſelves, or with the reputation which others have of us; did he abaſe himſelfe to the forme of a ſervant, and ſhall we lift up our ſelves, as if we reigned as Kings! he humbled himſelfe and became obedient to death, even the death of the Croſſe; and what have we to glory in but the Croſſe of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt (*Gal: 6. 14.*) if we have any thing to be proud of, 'tis the Croſſe of Chriſt, *God forbid* (ſaith *Paul*) *that I ſhould glory* (or rejoyce and triumph) *ſave in the Croſſe of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whereby I am crucified to the world, and the world to me.* Think often and much of the humblings of Chriſt, and then you will think of your ſelves as meere nothings. This is the moſt effectuall means, through the Spirit, to bring downe the ſwellings of our hearts, and *to hide pride from man.* Thus much of the ſecond deſigne of Chriſt in ſpeaking to man in dreames and viſions of the night; the third followeth.

Verſ. 18. *He keepeth back his ſoule from the pit, and his life from periſhing by the ſword.*

This verſe holds out another gracious intendment of God, in revealing himſelfe to man by dreames and viſions of the night. He doth it thereby to give man warning and wiſdome to prevent and eſcape that deſtruction which is ready to fall upon him.

He keepeth back his ſoule from the pit.

Some

Some referre this *He* to man himſelfe, that is, when God hideth pride from man, then man keepeth his ſoule from the pit; that is, thereby man is both admoniſhed and inſtructed how to keep his ſoule from the pit. *They who avoyde the mountains and precipices of pride, are moſt aſſured of eſcaping a downe-fall into perdition. Solomon* tells us (*Prov.* 16. 18.) *Pride goeth before deſtruction, and a high mind before a fall*; ſuch a fall as *Elihu* here ſpeakes of, *falling into the pit*; therefore turning from pride is the eſcaping of the pit.

But rather (as moſt Interpreters) the relative (*He*) referrs to God himſelfe, who both begins and perfects this great worke of Grace; As he ſpeaketh with a purpoſe to withdraw man from his purpoſe, *&c.* ſo *he* having effectually withdrawne him from it, and hid pride from him, he thereby humbleth him in the duſt of repentance, and ſo keepeth back his ſoule from the pit.

The word rendred, *keepeth back*, notes a threefold keeping back; Firſt, by force, as a man holds another from falling into a pit, or running into danger; he holds him whether he will or no. Secondly, there is a holding or keeping back by perſwaſion or entreaties, by ſeaſonable advice and counſel; ſo *Abigail* kept *David* from ſhedding blood (1 *Sam.* 25.) Thirdly, there is a holding or keeping back by authority, when a Command or an injunction forbids a man from going on, and ſo ſtops his proceeding. Thus we ſee there is a keeping back, either by outward force, or by counſel, or by command. And there is a keeping back according to any of theſe three notions, two ways. Firſt, ſuch a keeping back, as hinders the very attempt, ſuch a keeping back, as ſtops the firſt motions, or ſtep into an undertaking. Secondly, there is a keeping back when a man is deeply engaged in an undertaking, when he is gone on and is neere the journeys end of his owne purpoſe. Thus *David* was kept back from deſtroying *Nabal* when he was far advanced in that enterpriſe; and *Abimeleck* was kept back from taking *Sarah Abrahams* wife when the matter had made a very great progreſs in his ſpirit. Both theſe wayes we may underſtand it here, though chiefly, I conceive, in the latter. Sometimes God keepeth man, either by his power, or by perſwaſions and commands ſent to him, from ſetting ſo much as one foot forward in any ſinfull way leading to the pit; yet often he ſuffers him to goe on a great way, and when he is advanced far

חשך *ita prohibere ſignificat ut cum de initio dicitur prohibetur, ne quid omnino à principio fiat: quod proprie inhibere dicitur: hic autem non ad initium refertur, ſed ad jam captum, quaſi jam eſſet homo in via ad exitium niſi deus eum monuiſſet.* Coc:

far towards, yea is near, very neer to the pits brink, even ready to drop into it, then, then the Lord graciouſly keeps his ſoule from falling into it. This word is uſed in the negative twice to ſet forth the high commendation of *Abraham* (Gen. 22. 12. 16.) When God had commanded *Abraham* to offer his Son, and he was ſo ready to doe it, that preſently God tells him, *Now I know thou feareſt God, ſeeing thou haſt not withheld* (or kept back) *thy ſon, thine only ſon from me. Abraham* might have had many reaſonings within himſelfe to keep back and withhold his Son from being a Sacrifice, but, ſaith the Lord, *thou haſt not withheld or kept him back*; There the word is uſed in the negative, as alſo upon the ſame occaſion at the 16 verſe of the ſame Chapter. And ſo by *Job* (*Chap.* 7. 11.) *Therefore I will not refraine* (*or keep back*) *my mouth*. It is as hard a matter to keep back, or hold the mouth in, as it is to keep back a head-ſtrong horſe with a bridle. Therefore the Holy Ghoſt uſeth that Metaphor (*Pſal.* 39. 1.) But ſaith *Job*, *I will not refraine my mouth*, I will not keep it back, let it take its courſe, *I will ſpeak in the bitterneſſe of my ſpirit.* The word imports powerfull acting, take it either in the negative or affirmative. When the tongue is kept back, 'tis done by a mighty power of grace, and O how great as well as gracious is that power, which the Lord putteth forth to keep back a poor ſoul that is going, going apace too, from falling into the pit. *He keepeth back*

His ſoul from the pit.

But doth the ſoul fall into the pit? I anſwer, firſt, The ſoul is often in Scripture (by a Synecdoche) put for the whole man; *He keepeth back his ſoul*, that is, he keepeth him from the pit; ſecondly, poſſibly 'tis ſaid, *he keepeth his ſoul from the pit*, to teach us that man by running on in ſin, ruines his beſt part, it is not only his body, and his skin that he deſtroyeth by ſin, but his very ſoul. 'Tis a mercy that God telleth us aforehand the worſt of that danger, and the greatneſſe of the hazard, or how great a matter we venture upon evill wayes and wörkes. *He keepeth back his ſoul*

from the pit.

What pit? The word is rendred variouſly. Firſt thus, *he keeps* שחת *fovea, back corruptio, mors.*

Eruens animam ejus a corruptione. Vulg.

back his ſoul from corruption. The word is uſed for corrupting by ſin (*Gen.* 6. 12.) *And God looked upon the earth, and behold it was corrupt: for all fleſh had corrupted his way upon the earth*; that is, all men were grown wicked and ſtark naught. In the very next verſe (*verſ.* 13.) The ſame word is uſed to denote corrupting by punithment due to ſin; *Behold I will deſtroy* (or corrupt) *them with the earth*; that is, I will deſtroy the face of the earth, or deface the beauty of the earth, and I will alſo deſtroy all men from off the face of the earth. Secondly, the Septuagint render, *He ſpares his ſoul from death.* Thirdly, the Caldee Paraphraſe (as we) *He prohibits his ſoul from the pit*; theſe three, corruption, death, and the pit are of neer aliance; and the ſame word in the Hebrew tongue ſignifieth *corruption*, the *pit*, and *death*, The pit (or grave) is the place of corruption and the ſeat or houſe of death. We find the pit and deſtruction put together (*Pſal.* 55. 23.) *they ſhall goe to the pit of deſtruction*; So then the ſame word may well ſerve to ſignifie a pit, corruption and death; becauſe in the pit dead bodies or carkaſſes putrifie and corrupt. Yet *David* prophecying of Chriſt ſpeaks his aſſurance of eſcaping corruption, though not the pit or grave. (*Pſal.* 16. 10.) *Thou wilt not ſuffer thy holy one to ſee corruption, or the pit.* It is this word; that is, *thou* wilt not ſuffer him to corrupt in the pit of the grave; though being dead was buried and laid in the pit, *yet he did not ſee corruption in the pit.* That is, corruption had no power, no maſtery over him; for he looſed the bonds of death (it being impoſſible that he ſhould be held by them) the third day, yea with the firſt of that day, or as ſoon as it might be truly ſaid that it was the third day; Chriſt was buryed in the latter part of the ſixth day of the week, and aroſe early the firſt day of the week, even when it *did but begin to dawn towards the firſt day of the week.* (Math. 28. 1.) And therefore ſeeing as naturaliſts (according to Scripture evidence, *Joh.* 11. 39.) teſtifie corruption doth not naturally take hold of the body till the fourth day after death. The dead body of Chriſt was altogether free from corruption, or Chriſt (as was fore-ſhewed by *David* in the Pſalme) ſaw no corruption.

ἐρύσατο δὲ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ διαφθορᾶς. Sept. *Prohibebit animam ejus a fovea.* Targ.

Videre foveam eſt amplius quã ſepeliri, nimirũ ut is demum perfectè dicatur videre foveam, non qui ad tempus eſt, in fovea, ſed qui ejus vim corruptricem experitur, ſive videt corruptionem in ea; videre enim eſt ſentire ſive pati aliquid. Coc.

Further, this word *pit*, is taken not only for death, the grave, and corruption; but for thoſe contrivances and plots which are made and laid for any mans death or diſtruction. Thus *David* ſaid of his

his malicious and ſubtle enemies (*Pſ.* 7. 5.) *Into the pit which they have digged, themſelves are fallen*; that is, they are taken in their own plots; Thoſe words of the Pſalmiſt are an alluſion to Hunters or Fowlers who make pits to enſnare birds or beaſts; we muſt not imagine that there were pits literally made for *David*, but the pit was a plot or a contrivance to doe him miſchief, and he bleſſed God that as himſelf had eſcaped that miſchief, ſo that the miſchief-plotters and contrivers were taken with it themſelves. We have *David* ſpeaking againe under the ſame metaphor (*Pſ.* 9. 15.) *The Heathen are ſunk down in the pit that they made.* And (*Pſal.* 35. 7.) *Without cauſe they have hid for me their net in a pit, which without cauſe have they digged for my ſoul*; that is, they have laid a plot to undoe and deſtroy me. And if we take pit in this ſence it may hold well enough with the ſcope of the Text; for what is the pit, into which pride and evill purpoſes thruſt ſinfull man, but that miſchief and miſery which Satan is continually plotting againſt him? And from this miſchievous plot it is that God delivereth man, while 'tis ſaid by *Elihu*, *he keepeth back*

Foves denotat omnia vitæ diſcrimina. Pin.

His ſoul from the pit.

Some expound the word *ſoul* in this former part of the verſe, in oppoſition to *life* in the latter part of it, *and his life from periſhing by the ſword.* Soul and life are ſometimes taken promiſcuouſly, or indifferently for the ſame thing; yet there is a very great difference between ſoul and life; the life is nothing elſe but the union between ſoul and body; but the ſoul is a ſpirituall ſubſtance diſtinct from the body while remaining in it, and ſubſiſting it ſelf alone when ſeparate from it. That bond or knot which ties ſoul and body together, is, properly, that which *Elihu* ſpeaks of in the next words.

And his life

As God keeps back his ſoul from everlaſting deſtruction, ſo his life from temporall deſtruction. Though the ſoul be moſt precious, yet life is very precious; *ſkin for ſkin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life* (Chap. 2. 5.) 'Tis therefore no ſmall mercy for God to keep back a mans life

From

From perishing by the sword.

The sword is put sometime for warre, that being the principal instrument of warre; some insist much on that sence here, as if the words contained a promise of being kept from perishing by the sword of an open enemy. But the sword is here rather put for any kind or for all kinds of hurtfull evills; what ever doth afflict, vex, or destroy may be called the sword. The text strictly in the letter is thus rendred, *and his life from passing by or through the sword*, we say, *from perishing by the sword*; which passing by the sword is not to escape the sword, but to fall by the sword, Thus 'tis said of that idolatrous King *Ahaz* (2 *Kings* 16. 3.) *He caused his sons to passe through the fire*, the meaning is not that he delivered them out of the fire, but consumed them in the fire; for he made them passe through the fire to *Molech*, which was a sacrificing of them to that abominable idoll. It is also said (2 *Sam.* 12. 31.) when *David* took *Rabba* and destroyed the *Ammonites*, *he made them passe through the brick-kilne*, not to save them, but to consume them. Some conceive that this brick-kilne through which *David* made those captive *Ammonites* to passe was the fire or furnace of *Moloch*, that infamous Idoll of the *Ammonites* (with whose bloody and most cruell devotions the apostatizing Jewes or people of God, were in after times ensnared) And if so, then they might see God turning their sin into their punishment; and declaring his fiery wrath against them in that, by which they had declared their fooliish and abominable zeale. But that which I quote their punishment for, is only the forme of its expression; He made them *pass through the brick-kilne*; that is, perish in it. Thus here, *and his soul from passing by the sword*, is rightly translated *from perishing by the sword*. The word rendred *sword* signifies also any missive weapon, or weapon cast with the hand, especially a dart; so Mr. *Broughton* translates, *and his life from going on the dart*. The generall sence of this verse is plainly this;

Nomen gladii hoc in loco generaliter denotare puto, quicquid pungit, percutit, torquet cruciat vel affligit. Bold.

Transire in gladium est idem quod incidere in manus et tela hostium, et cadere in bello. Gladius חרב vocatur quasi missile telum. Drus.

The Lord withdraweth man from his purposes, and hides pride from man, that so he may in mercy preserve him from perishing both in body and soul, or that he may keep him not only from the first, but from the second death, which is the separation of the whole man from the blessed presence of God for ever. Tis a great favour to be kept from the pit where the body corrupts, or from the sword that wounds

wounds the flesh, but to be kept from that everlasting woe which shall overwhelme the wicked in that bottomlesse pit or lake of fire and brimstone, this is the highest favour of God to lost man. This is the pit, this the perishing *from which* (saith *Elihu*) *the Lord keepeth back the soul and life of man.*

First, from the emphasis of the word, *he keepeth back*, importing, that God, as it were by strong hand or absolute authority and command, keepeth the soul of man from the pit.

Note.

Man is very forward to run upon his own ruine, even to run upon eternall ruine, if the Lord did not hold, stay, and stop him.

Man would tumble into the pit, at the very next step, if God did not keep him. The way of man naturally is downe to the pit, and all that he doth of his own self is for his own undoing: And as he is kept back from the pit, so (as the Apostle *Peter* hath it, 1 *Epist.* 1. 5.) *he is kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation.*

Secondly, considering the season signified in the former verse, that when man is going upon an evill work, or walking in the pride of his heart, God is keeping him from the pit.

Note.

While man hath sinfull purposes and pride in his heart, all that while he is going on to destruction, both temporall and eternall.

Every step in sin is a step to misery, and the further any man proceedeth on in sin, the further he wanders from God; and the further he wanders from God, the neerer he comes to misery. As the further we goe from the Sun, the neerer we are to the cold, and the further we go from the fountaine, the nearer we are to drought; so they that hast to sin, hast to sorrow, yea to hell. *Solomon* saith of such, they love death. There is no man loves death under the notion of death, there is no beauty, no amiableness in death; but all they may be said to love death, who love sin, and live in it. Every motion towards sin, is a hasting into the armes and embraces of death, sinners wooe and invite death and the grave, yea hell and destruction.

Thirdly, note.

The warnings and admonitions which God gives to sinfull man, whether waking or sleeping are to keep him from perishing, to keep him from temporall, to keep him from eternall perishing.

This is the great end of preaching the Goſpel, the end alſo of preſſing the terrors of the Law; both have this aime to keep man from periſhing. When man is preſt to holineſſe, and when he is repreſt from the wayes of ſin, 'tis that he may not periſh for ever. God hath ſet up many ordinances, he hath imployed many inſtruments to adminiſter them; many thouſands goe up and downe preaching to the world, and crying out to the ſons of men, repent and beleeve, beleeve and repent; and why all this cry, but to keep ſouls from the pit, and their life from periſhing by the ſword? The Apoſtle *Jude* exhorts to *ſave ſome with fear, and of others to have compaſſion*, that is, terrifie ſome that you may ſave them, make them afraid that they may not be damned; *ſave them with fear*, plucking them as it were out of the fire. Sinners are running into the fire, and do not perceive it; they are tumbling down to hell and conſider it not; they muſt be pulled out of the fire, elſe they will burn in it for ever. The great buſineſſe of the Goſpell is to pull ſouls like firebrands out of the burning.

Fourthly, note.

They who turn from their evill purpoſes and the pride of their hearts, eſcape wrath, the pit, and the ſword.

The wages of ſin is death, and well are they that eſcape, that miſſe ſuch wages. If a ſinner turne from his purpoſe, from his ſinfull way, if his pride be ſubdued and he emptied of himſelf, then *his ſoul is kept from deſtruction, and his life from periſhing by the ſword.*

JOB,

JOB. Chap. 33. Verſ. 19, 20, 21, 22.

He is chaſtened alſo with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with ſtrong pain.
So that his life abhorreth bread, and his ſoul dainty meat.
His fleſh is conſumed away that it cannot be ſeen, and his bones that were not ſeen ſtick out.
His ſoul draweth neare unto the grave, and his life to the deſtroyer.

THe context of theſe foure verſes, containeth a deſcription of the ſecond meanes, which the wiſdome of God is pleaſed often to uſe for the humiliation of man, and for the diſcovery or revelation of his mind unto him. *He ſpeaketh in a dream, in a viſion of the night*, as was ſhewed before, he ſpeaketh alſo by paines and ſickneſſes, as is now to be conſidered.

Verſ. 19. *He is chaſtened alſo with pain.*

That particle which we render *alſo*, gives the text an emphaſis (*He is chaſtened alſo*) For it imports, that here is a further addition or ſupplement of meanes, whereby the Lord doth awaken ſinners to attend and obey his voyce. The ſubject of theſe foure verſes, is *a ſick man*, or, *the ſickneſs of man. A ſorrowfull ſubject.* And the ſickneſs of man is ſet forth in theſe foure verſes, by foure ſad ſymptomes or effects.

The firſt is paine, grievous paine, *ver;* 19. *He is chaſtened alſo with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with ſtrong paine.*

The ſecond ſymptome of this ſickneſs, is loſs of appetite, and his naiueating all manner of food (*v.* 20.) *So that his life abhorreth bread, and his ſoul dainty meat.*

The third ſymptome of his ſickneſs is a generall languiſhment or conſumption all his body over (*v.* 21.) *His fleſh is conſumed away that it cannot be ſeen, and his bones that were not ſeene ſtick out.*

The fourth and laſt ſymptome of this grievous ſickneſs is fainting,

ing, swooning, or a readiness to expire and give up the ghost (*v.* 22.) *His soul draweth near to the grave, and his life to the destroyer*; That is, he is sick, and even sick to death. All these are speciall symptomes of a sick man, or of the sickness of man. I begin with the first.

Verse. 19. *He is chastened also with pain upon his bed.*

The word which we render *to chasten*, hath a twofold signification in Scripture.

יכח *a reguit reprehendit, corripuit verbis sive factis.*

First, to reprove or convince both by authority and reason (*Levi:* 19. 17.) *Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart, thou shalt in any wise rebuke him*; or, *reproving thou shalt reprove him*; that is, *Thou shalt surely reprove him*. And in that famous Prophecy concerning Christ (*Isa:* 11. 4.) *He shall reprove with equity*; we put in the margin, *He shall argue with equity*, or convince by such reasons and arguments as shall carry the greatest equity in them. Thus when Christ had finished his Sermon on the mount, it is sayd (*Math:* 7. 28, 29.) *The people* (his Auditors) *were astonished at his doctrine, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the Scribes*. This Sermon carrying so great a reproofe of the Scribes and Pharisees, both as to their life and doctrine throughout, may well be expounded as a fullfilling of that ancient prophecy; It being confessed in another place of the Gospel, even by the Officers that were sent to attach him (*John* 7. 46.) *Never man spake like this man*. The words of Christ had so much evidence, so much equity in them, that they who came to take and catch him, were taken and caught, if not to conversion, yet to such a conviction, by what he spake, that they could not (though they highly displeased their Masters in saying so) but say, *Never man spake like this man*; As if they had sayd, *Surely, the man that speakes thus is more then a man.*

Secondly, The word often signifies to correct, which is also to instruct; correction is for instruction. *Chastning is the most reall reproving*. And so we render it, *He is chastened*. Man is instructed not only by speech and counsell, but by stripes and corrections. Thus *David* prayed (*Psal:* 6. 1.) *O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure*. The first word which we render *rebuke*, is that in the text; As if he had sayd, *Lord doe not rebuke me by angry afflictions, let me not find thee greatly*

greatly displeased, and my selfe sorely chastned at once. He deprecates the same againe, and how grievous the effects of such dispensations are, he sheweth (*Psal:* 38. 1.) *Rebuke me not in thy wrath*. (Psal: 39. 11.) *When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity*; (He means it not only of word-rebukes, but of hand-rebukes also, when thou with such doubled rebukes dost chasten man for iniquity) What then? The effects of it follow, even the staining of the glory of all flesh; *Thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth*. And so some interpret that (*Psal:* 105. 15.) *He reproved Kings for their sakes?* (speaking of his owne people) the Lord did not only speak to those Kings, but made them feel his hand, for his peoples sake. *Abimelech* felt his hand for *Abrahams* sake. And so did *Pharoah* that hard-hearted King in a whole decade of plagues for *Israels* sake, whom he had oppressed and would not let goe. We render the word in this second sense, for a rebuke by blowes or by correction, which yet hath a language in it, and speaks with a loud voyce to man; *He is chastened*

with paine upon his bed.

Paine is both the concomitant, and effect of sickness. The word noteth, First, the paine of the body, caused either by the violence of inward distempers, or from the outward stroake of a wound (*Gen:* 34.) When the sons of *Jacob* had prevailed with the *Shechemites* to receive Circumcision, *It came to passe on the third day, when they were sore*, or pained with the wound of it, *Simeon and Levi came upon them* (Gen: 34. 25.) Secondly, the word signifieth as bodyly paine caused any way, so paine of the mind, which is griefe or sorrow (*Psal:* 69. 29.) *I am poore and sorrowfull*. Sorrow is alwayes the effect of paine, either outward or inward, either of the flesh or spirit; yet the wounds of the spirit cause the greatest paine; for of that *Solomon* saith, (*Pro:* 18. 14.) *Who can beare it?* The same *Solomon* (Pro: 14. 13.) speaking of a wicked man in his highest jollity, saith, *In laughter the heart is sorrowfull*. His conscience aketh (if he have an awakened conscience) even while he laugheth; and surely while the heart is sorrowfull and pained, laughter yeeldeth little pleasure. We may take paine in this text in both senses, but specially in the former. The sick man is often pained in mind, but alwayes in his body.

כאב *doluit corpore vel animo.*

He

He is chastened with pain

Upon his bed.

There he used to have rest, but being sick his bed becoms restless to him. To be *upon the Bed*, is a periphrasis of sickness; That of Christ (*Luke* 17. 34.) *There shall be two in one bed, the one shall be taken, and the other left*, as it may be meant of any two Bedfellowes (especially of husband and wife) in their health, so some take it principally of two in a sick bed; Grace takes hold of one and not of another upon a sick bed. I insist not upon that sense, though it be a probable and a profitable one. But surely to say, *A man is chastened with paine upon his bed*, implyeth, the man to be in extraordinary pain; as to say, such *a man keepes his bed*, implyeth, he hath more then an ordinary sickness, or that he is very sick. We have three expressions in our language gradually setting forth the sickness of a person; First, we say, *he keepes his house*. He that is not well doth not goe abroad, sickness houseth him. Secondly, we say, *he keepes his chamber*; that's a further degree, when sickness hath brought a man up staires, and shut him in his chamber, he is sicke indeed. Thirdly, we say, such *a man keeps his bed*; The meaning of which every one understands to be, that he is dangerously or extreamly sick. Thus when *Elihu* saith, *He is chastened with pain upon his bed*; we may conceive him so ill, that either he must not, or is not able to sit up. And *Elihu* in speaking thus, seemes to have relation to what *Job* had sayd (*Chap:* 7. 13.) *When I sayd my bed shall comfort me, and my couch shall ease my complaint; Then thou scarest me with dreames, and terrifiest me through visions.* As if he had sayd, *O Job, thou indeed hast had recourse heretofore, to thy bed for refreshing and comfort, in silent meditations and soliloquies with God, but he terrified thee with dreames, and spake to thee by fearing visions, to turne thee from thy purpose. And not only so, but finding thee deafe to those admonitions, or not regarding them, yea still continuing thy unquiet murmurings, he hath now even made thee bedrid, or unable to rise from thy bed.* Though *Elihu* spake here in the third person, yet in all his speech he intended and poynted at, yea set forth and poynted out *Jobs* condition. *He is chastened with paines upon his bed,*

And the multitude of his bones with strong pain.

A man may have paine, yea many paines, yet no paine in his bones. Bones are to the body as beames and rafters, as posts and pillars are to a house. And when pain comes to the bones, when it shakes those posts and pillars, it must needs be a very strong paine. Satan sayd to God concerning *Job*, while he sought new tryalls for him, in the second Chapter of this Book (*vers.* 5.) *Touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.* And that he might be fully tryed, the Lord suffer'd Satan to afflict him to the bone, nor did Satan leave a bone unafflicted; what *Elihu* spake here of man in Generall, was true of him, *The multitude of his bones were chastned with strong paine.* To have any one bone in paine is an affliction, much more to have many bones pained and aking at once. But when the multitude of a mans bones, that is, all his bones are pained together, that's grievous. And such a man is the while as it were upon a rack. That by the multitude of bones here spoken of, we are to understand, not only many, or a great many of his bones, but all his bones, may appeare from (*Job* 4. 14.) where *Eliphaz* describing those terrible visions with which God sometime visited him, saith, *A spirit passed before my face, the haire of my flesh stood up*, &c. *which made all my bones to shake.* We put in the margin, *The multitude of my bones.* The multitude of his bones are all his bones, he hath not so much as one bone free. The whole systeme of his bones is as it were confounded and disjoynted. *The multitude of his bones is chastned*

with strong paine.

Multitudo ossium dicitur pro omnibus ossibus quam multa sunt. Coc:

The word *paine*, is not expres'd in the latter part of the verse; the Hebrew is, *The multitude of his bones with strong paine.* Mr *Broughton* renders thus, *And all his bones with a sore one.* The word which we translate *strong*, signifieth two things; First, as we render, *strength or might* (Psal: 74. 15.) *Thou drivedst up mighty rivers*; God dryed up the river *Jordan* for his people to passe through, yea and the red Sea. Secondly, the word signifieth perpetuall lasting or continuall. So some render that place in the Psalmes, not *strong or mighty rivers*, but *he dryed up everlasting or perpetuall rivers*, such as had alwayes run with a full streame, and were not like those deceitfull brookes (spoken of in the 6th Chap: of this book (*v.* 15th) to which *Job* compared his Brethren) which in winter over-flow the bankes, but in summer, *what time*

they waxe warme, they vanish when it is hot, and are consumed out of their place. Now, in this place, I conceive, we may take the word in either sense, either for strong and great or chronicall, and lasting paine. The man is so sick that he hath no good houres, no comfortable intermissions, his paine continueth. And because the word *paine* is not in the text, therefore it hath caused severall renderings of these words, yet all meeting in the same sense.

First, Some joyne the word *strong* to *bone*, or make it an epethite of the mans bones. *Though the multitude of his bones be strong*, that is, though he were once a strong man, sound and perfect all over, or as we say, *sound wind and limbe*, not crazy, not having the least flaw in him, yet he is chastened all over with paine.

In multitudine ossium ejus est fortis, i.e. acris acerbus dolor.

Secondly, Others thus, *in the multitude of his bones*, or, *in all his bones there is a strong one*, that is, a strong paine or griefe seizeth and possesseth all his bones.

Legendo vocem רוב *et lis ossium ejus vehemens est*, i.e. *dolor ossium ejus per quem cum ipso velut litigat.*

Thirdly, Thus, *The contention of his bones is strong*; the word which signifieth a *multitude*, being alike in the letters with another which signifieth *contention* or *strife*, hath given occasion for this reading; that of *David* is neere the same, *There is no rest in my bones* (Psal: 38.3.) As if *Elihu* had sayd, the paine and anguish by which God doth contend with all his bones is strong, or God hath a strong controversie with his bones upon his sicke bed.

Sunt ex Hebræis qui רוב *multitudo, quia per* ו *scribitur* ריב *etsi legatur per* ו *exponunt pro contentione, quasi deus cum ossibus ejus contendat.*

Lastly, The vulgar translates, *He maketh all his bones to wither, decay, and rott.* When there is a consumption or a withering among the bones, how intolerable is the paine! Broken bones cause the acutest paines, but decaying bones the most constant paine. Withering bones are opposed to fatned bones in that promise made to him that fasts spiritually, not carnally only in abstaining from flesh (*Isa:* 58. 11.) *The Lord will make fat thy bones*; As if he had sayd, Doe not feare that thou shalt pine by spirituall fasting, I will make fat thy bones. Which is true even in regard of that which is naturall, the Lord reneweth bodily strength to those who humble themselves soule and body. The body shall not suffer in this service of the Lord, if the soule be truly afflicted in it. Yet when he saith, *he will make fat thy bones*, it respects especially their spirituall strength, that thrives best in a day of holy abstinence and fasting. Here, when 'tis sayd, *their*

their bones shall wither through paine, it notes the declining of the whole body, because as the bones are strong in themselves, so they are the strength and support of the whole outward man. When God smites the bones, then he shakes the pillars and rafters of our earthly house, and threatens the downfall of it. *He is chastened with paine upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain.*

Taking these words in connection with the former, where *Elihu* spake of those dreames and visions by which God speakes to man, and supposing (as there he doth) that because the man is not well awakened by those dreames and visions from his security, therefore the Lord sendeth pain and sickness upon him, as a second meanes to humble him, and make him understand himselfe.

Observe.

They that will not be instructed by dreames, that is, by gentler meanes, shall be instructed by paines.

They who will not take instruction, even in their sleep, shall be taught by that, which will keep t[illegible]wake. Severall Scriptures tell us of the Lords proceedi[illegible]man from words to blowes. And if the Lord proceed[illegible]dreames (which are warnings in sleepe) to blowes, if wh[illegible]e hath spoken to us in a dreame, we hearken not, he will chasten us with paine, even the multitude of our bones with strong paine. And then much more will he proceed from words to blows with them that are warned to awake, if they heare not and take warning. That's an awakening word to those who sleepe waking (*Psal:* 7. 12, 13.) *If he turn not he will whet his sword: He hath bent his bowe and made it ready.* If men will not returne upon word-admonition and reproofe, the Lord hath his arrowes and his sword to reprove them with. *Turne ye at my reproofe*, saith the Lord (*Pro:* 1. 23.) I give you warning to turne, but if you doe not, then (as presently it followeth) *I will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your feare cometh.* As you have seemed to mock at my counsels, so I will mock at your calamities, that is, I will shew you no pity, as you have shewed me no respect. Thus the Lord deales with proud rebellious man, who casts off his yoake, yea sometimes he deales very severely with his owne people (for they may put him

to it) if words will not serve their turne (words in sleepe, and words when awake) they may expect blowes next; and be made to feele the hand of God, because they have not understood or not obeyed his will.

Secondly, From the manner of expression, *He is chastened with paine upon his bed.* The Spirit of God useth a word referring to instruction both by smiting and speaking, to shew that there is a voyce in the rod.

Hence note.

The chastisements of God upon us are our documents.

When God sends sickness and grievous paines, he reproves sinners from Heaven and chides them for the errours of their lives. The chastenings of the Lord are speakings. He speaketh by his rods beyond all the eloquence of words (*Mic. 6.9.*) *Hear ye the rod.* The voyce of God is in his rod; that speaks so loud from Heaven in many stroaks, that the prophanest sinners on earth are sometimes forced to heare and acknowledge it. As those Magicians were forced by the plaine evidence of the fact to say (*Ex. 8. 19.*) *This is* [illegible]*er of God*; So they must say, *This is the voyce of God.* He [illegible] us, and speaks to purpose in these afflictions: The voyce [illegible] in affliction, exceeds all the rhetorick and perswasions of [illegible]tall men. The crosse is a schoole, in which they who are dull at hearing what God speaks to them in his word, are wonderfully quickened up by his rod. *The words of the wise* (saith *Solomon*) *are goads.* And surely these goads of affliction are pricking piercing words, for the promoting and putting on of a lazy soul in Gods worke. *Job* had desired God to speak with him, *Elihu* answers, Why dost thou desire more answers or directions from God? Hath not God spoken to thee in these soares and sicknesses, in these chastisements, with pain upon thy bed? Is God wanting to thy instruction? hath he not clearly told thee his mind and thy duty? hath he not written, yea engraven his will upon thy diseased flesh? What are the paines, the corruption, the consumption, the strange deformity, and sad transfiguration of thy body, but as so many voyces of God, speaking and speaking aloud to thee, repent and humble thy selfe? Therefore attend, hearken to and meditate upon the answers which he hath impressed or printed legibly upon thy head, face, and wrinkled

led forehead. Thou hast his answer his owu way, therefore be satisfied, and doe not stand desiring that God would answer thee after thy way, nor complaining because he doth not. And we may reply not only to obstinate sinners, but to many of the people of God, when they enquire what the mind of God is, or what he intends towards them. His providences give you many items and memorandums; which if you can spell out and read you may know his meaning. This lesson, the signification of the word offereth us as the connection of the words offered in the former.

Thirdly, learne hence.

Man is a poor crazy creature subject to all diseases and infirmities.

Yea, he is not only subject to them, but he is the subject of them. His body is as it were a vessell of naturall corruption, as his soul is a vessell of morall corruption. Man is called not only *Adam*, noting the matter of which he was made, *earth, red earth*; but he is called *Enosh*, that is, sorrowfull, sighing, groaning man, he is a pined and a pining man: He is also called *Abel*, vanity, a poor vain man; which two latter Titles have befallen man since man fell from God.

Fourthly, (which may check the grosse Atheisme of many)

Observe.

Pain and sickness come not by chance, nor are we to stay in nature for the cause of their coming.

They come not at all by chance, nor doe they come altogether from naturall causes. Nature hath somewhat to doe in their coming, but somewhat else much more, even so much more, that in respect of that, naturall considerations may be quite shut out, and the whole cause ascribed to that. But what is that? surely, nothing else but, and nothing lesse then the will of God. He is pleased to give commission to pains and sicknesses, and then they come. *Elihu* would teach *Job* (what he owned before) that God was the sender and orderer of all his afflictions, as of the losses he had in his estate and children, so of the pains and sicknesses which he felt in his body. *Moses* tells the children of *Israel*, not only that sword and captivity, but the Pestilence, Consumptions, Feavers, and burning Agues are sent by God himself, (*Deut. 28. 21, 22.*)

What

What are diseases but the Lords Messengers? When he pleaseth he can trouble the temper and cause the humours of the body to corrupt. He can make them contend with one another to the death, let Physitians doe what they can to quiet and pacifie them. Yea though some skillfull Physitians have kept their own bodies in so due a temper, and to so exact a diet, that they could not see which way a disease could take hold of them, or have any advantage against them, yet sickness hath come upon them like an armed man, and carryed them away to the grave.

Further, When *Elihu* saith of the sick man, *the multitude of his bones are chastened with strong paine.*

Note.

No man is so strong, but the Lord is able to bring him down by pain and sickness.

He that is strong as an Oake, and hath (as it were) a body of brasse and sinews of iron; yet the Lord can make him as weak as water. The Lord hath strong pains for strong men, and can quickly turne our strength into weakness. Thus *Hezekiah* lamented in his sickness (*Isa.* 38. 13.) *I reckoned till morning that as a Lion, so will he break all my bones.* God can arme diseases with the strength of a Lion, who not only teareth the flesh, but breaketh the bones with his teeth. *David* saith (*Psal.* 39. 11.) *When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth, surely every man is vanity.* The word there rendred *beauty* signifieth *desire*, thou makest his desire, or that which is most desireable in him to fade away; we well translate *beauty*, because beauty draweth the desires of man after it, and is so much desired, yea lusted after by man. Now, as when the Lord doth but touch the body, he can make the beauty, so also the strength of it to consume away as a moth.

חמודו
Desiderabile ejus bene eum curatum corpus denotat.

Sixtly, whereas it is said, *He is chastened with pain upon his bed.*

We learne.

The Lord can make those things easelesse and restlesse to us, which use to give us most ease and rest.

He that being up is weary, weary with walking, riding or labouring, hopeth to find ease in his bed, yet then doth pain deny him rest

rest there, and filleth him (as *Job* complained, *Chap.* 7. 4.) *with toſſings too and fro unto the dawning of the day.* The Lord can make the Stocks or a Rack ease to us, and our beds as uneasie to us as the Stocks or a Rack usually are.

Lastly, observe.

The purpose of God in chastening man with sickness, is to teach and instruct him, not vex and destroy him.

The Lord hath many designes upon man when he afflicts him, about all which he instructs him by affliction. He designes

First, To humble and breake the stoutness of mans spirit; hence sicknesses and afflictions are called humiliations; and the same word signifies both to be afflicted and humbled.

Secondly, To make men taste how bitter a thing sin is; *This is thy wickedness* (saith the Lord of his sore Judgements brought upon his people *Israel* (Jer. 4. 18.) *Because it is bitter.* Ye would not taste the evill or bitterness of sin by instruction, therefore I will teach you by affliction.

Thirdly, To put sorrowfull sinfull man upon the search of his owne heart, and the finding out of the errour of his wayes. While men are strong and healthfull, they seldome find leisure for that worke. And therefore they are confined by sickness to their houses, to their chambers, yea to their beds, that they may attend it, and read over the whole book of their lives (*Lam.* 3. 39, 40.) *Wherefore doth the living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sin; Let us search and try our wayes, and turne to the Lord.* That's mans worke upon his bed, and 'tis Gods aime in binding him to his bed, that he may have liberty for that worke.

Fourthly, Afflictions are design'd by God to bring man out of love with sin, yea to stirre up a holy hatred and revenge in him against it; as upon many other accounts, so upon this, because it rewardeth him so ill, and he finds such unsavoury fruits of it. A little digging will discover sin to be the roote of all those evill and bitter fruits, which we at any time are fed with in this world. Sin is the gall in our cup, and the gravel in our bread, and we are made to taste bitte[illegible] finde trouble, that we may both know and acknowle[illegible]e so.

Fifthly, The purp[illegible] of God in afflicting us, is to set us a praying to and seeking after him. We seldome know our need.

of

of him, till we feele it. (*Hos:* 5. 15.) *In their affliction they will seek me early*; affliction puts man upon supplication, yet every man who is afflicted, doth not presently seek God (many in their affliction mind not God, they seek to men, not to God, a crosse without a Christ, never made any seek God) but affliction through the workings of the Spirit of Christ, is a meanes to bring the soule to God; and we see the effect of it at the beginning of the next Chapter in the same Prophet (*Hos:* 6. 1.) *Come let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heale us*, &c.

Sixthly, God is pleased to exercise us with crosses, for the exercise of our Graces, or to set grace aworke; Grace hath most businesse to doe when we are taken off from all worldly business, and are layd upon our bed, our sick-bed. Some worke is not done so well any where else, as there. And many graces worke best when 'tis worst with us; they would even stand still, and have nothing to doe, if God did not bring us into straights, or keep us for a season in them. In a sick-bed the Lord shews us, and we may find work enough for all our graces, especially for faith and patience, and submission of spirit to his worke and will. We may doe better worke (and doe it better) in sickness then in health.

Seventhly, God brings many upon their sick-beds, to teach them the worth of health, and make them thankfull for it. They who are seldome sicke, are as seldome thankfull for their health, and scarce reckon that for a mercy, the want whereof, they have never felt. 'Tis rare that we prize what we have, till we have it not.

Eightly, God exerciseth many with sickness, with a purpose to put men upon a holy purpose of improving their health better, and of doing more for God while 'tis well with them.

Lastly, not a few are afflicted, that God may have an opportunity to doe his worke, and declare his power. God himself would be hindred of much glorious work, in restoring and recovering them to health, did he not chasten them upon sick beds. The question was put about the blind man (*Joh.* 9. 3, 4.) *Who did sin, this man or his Parents that he was [illegible] blind.* Jesus answered neither hath this man sinned nor his [illegible] *but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.* [illegible] had not been a blind man in the world, how could the power [illegible] God have been made manifest in giving sight to the blind? if some were not extreamly tor-

torturingly sick, how would the power of God be seene in healing the sicke, and rebuking their paine? For all these purposes, *Man is chastened with paine upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong paine.* We never profit by chastenings, till we answer the purposes of God in sending them, and unless we know what and which they are, we can never answer them. If we answer these nine toucht upon, we shall either answer all, or, to be sure, we shall baulke or refuse none. *Elihu* having thus shewed us the sicke man in paine, proceeds to shew us what further effect his paine and sickness wrought upon him.

Vers. 20. *So that his life abhorreth bread, and his soule dainty meat.*

This verse sheweth the second effect of sickness. The former was paine, This is loss of appetite, or nauseousnesse.

His life.

That is, his living body; We may call the sick mans body a living body, though it be hard to say whether we should number him among the living or the dead. We read life put for the body which liveth, or whereby it liveth. (*Psal:* 88. 3.) *My soule* (saith *Heman*) *is full of troubles, and my life draweth nigh unto the grave*; that is, I am ready to dye, and my body to be buryed. He doth not say, he hath no great stomack to, but *his life*

abhorreth bread.

The word here used is of a Syriack derivation; nor is it found any where in Scripture but here. The nowne signifieth any thing that is filthy, excrementicious or uncleane; whence the verbe is rendred to *abhorre*, loath, or nauceate; because we abhorre those things which are filthy or uncleane. *His life abhorreth*

bread.

That is common food. Sometimes *bread* is put for all kind of dyet; as *David* sayd to *Mephibosheth* (2 Sam: 9. 10.) *Thou shalt eat bread at my table.* But because of that opposition in the text to dainties, by *bread*, we may here understand only ordinary food; *His life abhorreth bread,*

Vox גהם *Syra est, notat nauseare facere nam* זוחמא *sordes scoriam excrementum quicquid sordicum et immundum est vel in humano corpore vel ex eo excretū.* Drus: Merc:

 and

and his soule dainty meat.

The Hebrew is, *Meat of desire.* Not only such meat, as men usually desire for the wholesomnesse of it, but such as curious palates desire for the pleasantnes of it; such meat is here meant; Yea thirdly, such meat as the man had a desire to before his sickenesse for the sutableness of it to his owne taste and appetite, he then abhorreth.

His soule abhorreth dainty meat.

The turning of the stomack, and losse of appetite, are usuall symptomes of sickness; Almost all sicknesses weaken the appetite, and some take it quite away, so that the patient not only hath no desire to, but *loathes dainty meate, or meate of desire.* This phrase or forme of speaking is used (*Dan:* 10. 3.) *I* (saith he) *ate no pleasant bread, or no bread of desires* (as we put in the margin) *neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth.* 'Tis used againe (2 *Chro:* 32. 27.) *Hezekiah made himselfe treasuries for silver and gold,* &c. *and all manner of pleasant jewells*; we put in the Margin, *for all jewells of desire.* So (*Amos* 5. 11.) *Pleasant vineyards, or vineyards of desire.* It was the manner of the Hebrews to expresse *pleasant* by *desirable*, because pleasant things are much desired. *His soule abhorreth meate of desire, or dainty meate.*

Hence note.

First, *'Tis a mercy to tast our meat, or to take the comfort of what we eate.*

Many have meat, but cannot taste it. That which giveth the best taste to our meat, is a taste of the goodnesse of God in it (1 *Pet:* 2. 1.) *If ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.* It is sweet to taste meat and the goodnesse of the Lord together.

Secondly, Note.

God can quickly make those things that are most desirable to us, dainty meat, meat of desire, loathsome to us.

Some abhor meat, because they have eaten of it long. The *Jewes* did eate Manna and Quailes till they loathed them (*Num:* 11. 20.) Others loath meat, because they have eaten over-much. A third sort, loath some meat by a naturall antipathy against it. Fourthly,

Fourthly, Others loath wholsome meat out of a curiosity, because it is not dainty enough. Lastly, Sickness causeth a loathing of all meate, even of the most dainty and desirable meate. And the Lord at any time can make that which was our desire, our loathing. We have a like description of a sick man (*Ps:* 107. 18.) *His soule abhorreth all manner of meat, and draweth neere unto the gates of death.*

Thirdly, Note.

The best of Creature-comforts are but vaine comforts.

What can dainty meat doe a man good, when he is sicke and ready to dye? Then gold and silver, lands and houses, which are the dainty meat of a covetous man, are loathsome to him. When a man is sicke to death, his very riches are sapless and tastles to him; wife and children, friends and acquaintance can yeild little comfort in that dark houre, yea they often prove miserable comforters: When we have most need of comfort, these things administer least or no comfort at all to us. Is it not our wisdome then to get a stock of such comforts, as will hold and abide fresh with us, when all worldly comforts either leave us, or become tastles to us? Is it not good to get a store of that food, which how sick soever we are, our stomacks will never loath? yea the sicker we are, our soules will the more like, hunger after, and feed the more heartily upon. *The flesh of Christ is meat indeed* (Joh: 6. 55.) Feed upon him by faith, in health and in sickness, ye will never loath him. His flesh is the true meat of desires, such meat as will fill and fatten us, but never cloy us. A hungry craving appetite after Christ, and sweet satisfaction in him are inseparable, and still the stronger is our appetite, the greater is our satisfaction. And (which is yet a greater happiness) our soules will have the strongest appetite, the most sharp-set stomacke after Christ, when, through bodily sickness, our stomacks cannot take down, but loath the very scent and sight of the most pleasant perishing meate, and delicious earthly dainties. Looke, that ye provide somewhat to eat, that will goe downe upon a sick-bed; your sick-bed meat is Christ; all other dainty food may be an abhorring to you.

Further, Not only are we to consider the sickness of the body, as the cause of this tastlesness and listlesness after bread. But

we are to conſider the ſick man *abhorring dainty meate*, under the hideings of Gods face, or in feares about his ſpirituall ſtate; as appeares by that which followeth, *if there be a meſſenger with him, an interpreter, one of a thouſand, to ſhew unto man his uprightneſſe*, or to ſet him right in his ſpirituall ſtate, &c. The ſick man for want of that as well as for want of health, can taſte no ſweetneſs in the rareſt dainties.

Hence note.

A ſenſe of divine diſpleaſure, or the hideing of divine favour from the ſoule, renders all outward comforts comfortleſſe to us.

If a man have never ſo much health, yet the appearances of divine diſpleaſure will make him ſick of his moſt pleaſant things. Carnall men can eat and drink, and live upon pleaſures, yea upon the pleaſures of ſin, and goe on merrily with them a while, becauſe they know not the meaning of the diſpleaſure of God, nor doe they know what the favour of God meaneth; they underſtand not what they want, yea they flatter themſelves that they have enough, and are well enough, though they have nothing, and are nothing, that is of any worth. But if God once awaken them out of this dreame, and ſhew them their curſed condition, all will be gall and wormwood to their taſte, or as gravel between their teeth. As the ſenſe of divine favour makes bitter things ſweet, and ſorrowfull things comfortable to us, the ſoure herbs of affliction dainties to us; ſo not only common but dainty meat, all the cates and viands of this world will be not only taſtleſs but bitter to us when God frownes upon us. An earneſt in the love and favour of God is the good of all good things.

For the cloſe of all, take theſe two Counſells, upon the occaſion of theſe words.

Firſt, *Receive your bread and dainty meate with prayer and thankeſgiving*; you may quickly elſe come to abhorre your bread, yea and your dainties. The word and prayer both ſanctifie and ſweeten all creature-enjoyments.

Secondly, Take heed of abuſing your meate; ye may quickly be brought to a loathing of it. When they who have given themſelves up to luxury and intemperance lye upon their ſick-beds and find their ſtomacke turned from all their dainties, it will be moſt grievous to them to conſider how they have abuſed their dainties

dainties to feed their luſts. As ſome who abuſe the creatures are puniſhed with the want of them, ſo others with an abhorrence and loathing of them.

So much for this ſecond ſymptome of ſickneſs, *His life abhorreth bread, and his ſoul dainty meat*. The third followeth, and appeareth in the generall decay and languiſhment of the ſick mans body.

Verſ. 21. *His fleſh is conſumed away, that it cannot be ſeene, and his bones that were not ſeene, ſtick out.*

In this verſe and the next, *Elihu* ſtill inſiſts upon his deſcription of the ſick mans condition, and in them he gives us two other ſad effects or ſymptomes of his ſickneſs.

Firſt, The generall waſt and conſumption of the body (*verſ.* 21.)

Secondly, The utmoſt perill of life (*v.* 22.)

Elihu deſcribes the firſt effect of ſickneſſe (the firſt here but the third in order) by two things.

Firſt, By the diſappearing of that which uſed to be ſeene, and appeare very faire and beautifull; the viſible part grows (as it were) inviſible, *his fleſh is conſumed away, that it cannot be ſeene.*

Secondly, By the appearing of that which uſed not to be ſeene; his inviſible parts (not ſo in their own nature, but as to their place, I ſay, his inviſible parts) grow viſible, *His bones which were not ſeen, ſtick out*. Thus with much elegancy he ſets forth the ſorrowfull and deplorable eſtate of the ſick man.

His fleſh is conſumed away.

As if he had ſayd, Before his ſickneſſe he was full of fleſh, fat and faire, but falling into ſickneſs, he falls away, and is worne, (as we ſay) to skin and bones; *his fleſh is conſumed*. Fleſh, in Scripture, is taken two wayes.

Firſt, Improperly, and Tropically.

Secondly, Literally or Properly.

In a Tropicall and Improper ſenſe, *fleſh* ſignifieth our ſinfull corruption (*Gal.* 5. 17.) *The fleſh evermore luſteth againſt the ſpirit*, that is, the unregenerate part in man againſt the regenerate.

Theſe

These two are always contending and combating with one another in all those whom Christ hath conquered to himselfe. Happy are they that finde their flesh, in this sense, consuming away; and 'tis that which every man is studying (who knows what godlinesse meanes) the consumption of this flesh, even the mortification of his lusts, of pride and earthlinesse, of wrath, envie, and unbeliefe.

Secondly, flesh by a figure is put for the whole naturall body, consisting of many parts dissimilar to flesh. Thus the Psalmist complained in prayer, that, *the Lord had given the flesh of his Saints, to the beasts of the earth* (Psal. 79. 2.) that is, he had exposed their bodies, through the rage and cruelty of their enemies, to the teeth and bowells of savage and ravenous beasts.

Thirdly, flesh is also put for the whole man consisting both of soul and body. (*Gen.* 6.12,13.) *The Lord saw that all flesh had corrupted their wayes.* That is, all men (who are made up of a body and soul) had corrupted their wayes by letting loose and acting their sinfull corruptions.

Fourthly, flesh is sometimes put for that which is best in man, his greatest naturall perfections, whatsoever in him is lesse then grace, whatsoever is highest in him, below the spirit, is called flesh in Scripture. When *Peter* (*Math.* 16. 17.) had made that blessed confession which is the rock upon which the Church is built (*thou art Christ the Son of the living God*) presently Christ tells him *flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee*, that is, the highest, and the most perfect piece of nature hath not taught thee this lesson; the Evangelist saith of all true beleevers (who have received this power (or priviledge) to become the sons of God) *they are borne not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh* (Joh. 1. 13.) that is, the best of the creature, contributes nothing to the bringing forth of new creatures, the sons of God.

Fifthly, flesh by a figure is put for all that in religion, or in the worship of God, which is outward, or open to the eye; whatsoever comes under any humane observation, is but the flesh of Religion, or the flesh of worship. In this sence the Apostle puts the question (*Rom.* 4. 1.) *What shall we say then, that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?* What he means by the flesh, he tells us in the next words, *he was not justified by works*, that is, not by any thing that did appeare, not by any thing done to him or done by him. He was not justified by Circumcision, or by

by the use of any externall rite, he was not justified by his own righteousnes, or obedience to the Law. The same Apostle also calls the very worship of the Gospell, as to the outward part of it, *flesh* (*Phil.* 3. 3.) *For we are the Circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoyce in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.* That is, in any outward work, or priviledge which we have in our Gospell state. All this flesh likewise ought to be consumed in our apprehensions, that is, we must make nothing of it, nor reckon it any thing in our account for justification in the sight of God or acceptance with him.

Secondly, Flesh properly taken is that integrall and similar part of the body, which is opposed to blood and bones, to veins and sinews. When *Elihu* saith *his flesh is consumed*, we are to understand it either in this proper sence, or in the second figurative sence before named, as flesh is put for the whole body; *his flesh is consumed*, that is, his flesh in opposition to his bones spoken of before, or his flesh that is his outward man.

Is consumed.

The Originall word signifies to *wax old*; for as when a man recovers from sickness, his flesh is said to returne like the flesh of a child. So when he is under the extreamity of any sickness, his flesh, as it were, waxeth old, or withereth like the flesh of an old man. Thus 'tis translated (*Lamen.* 3. 4.) *My flesh and my skin hath he made old*; that is, though I am not old in yeares, or how young soever I am, yet God, by many sufferings, hath made me look like an old man; I am decayed and weake. *David* speaking of wicked worldly men, tells us, (*Psal.* 49. 14.) *Their beauty shall consume in the grave*; As death and the grave make a totall and finall consumption of the beauty of bad men, that is, of all that splendour and bravery wherein they lived, while they lived in the body; so paines and sicknesses do exceedingly consume the body, and eate out the flesh. As a tyrannicall oppressor eates out the people under his government, in which sence this word is applyed (*Dan.* 7. 25.) Or as a garment is worn out by time and using. The flesh is often in Scripture compared to a garment, and dying to uncloathing; because when we dye we put off the flesh. The garment of the flesh, that beautifull garment waxeth old and weares out apace on a sick bed. Sickness not only staineth and

כלה *senuit consenuit in pia et consumsit.*

and abateth the beauty of it, but wasteth it deeply, so that, as it followeth

it cannot be seene;

Or as Mr *Broughton* renders, *his flesh wasteth away from sight*, or he hath no flesh left to be seene.

Againe, When it is sayd, *his flesh is consumed away that it cannot be seene*, some expound it thus; *His flesh is so consumed away, that the seer withdraweth from it*; or no man cares to see it, that is, the sick man is so discoloured and wasted, that visiters and spectators start and are almost frighted to looke upon him. The flesh of man in a healthfull and flourishing condition, is a lovely spectacle, and draws beholders, but the flesh of a very sick man is a gastly spectacle and a regreet to the beholder. We love not to see that which we doe not like. Beauty attracts, deformity withdrawes the eye. It is sayd of *Jesus Christ himselfe*, that he was so deformed by his sufferings (*Isa:* 52. 14.) that *many were astonish'd at him (his visage was so marred more then any man, and his forme more then the sons of men)* and (*Isa:* 53. 3.) *We hid as it were our faces from him, he was despised and we esteemed him not*; that is, he was so dis-figured by sorrow, that no man cared to look upon him. Thus 'tis often with the sick. And this is a profitable and a probable sense of the text in hand; *His flesh is consumed away*, and then he who before delighted to see it, is troubled at the sight of it, or is rather affrighted then pleased in seeing it.

Quid si carnem consumi à visu, per elegantem hyperbolen effer, tam manifestè indies marcescere, ut quasi ab ipso respicientis oculo consumi videatur. Bold:

There is yet a fourth reading, which further aggravates the sick mans consumption; *His flesh is consumed in sight*; that is, say some, his flesh doth consume so fast, that a man may almost see him consume; as we say of some plants, they grow so fast, that we may, almost, see them grow; so we may say of those that decline and fade much, we may see them consume, their flesh consumeth even to the eye or to view. He that lookes stedfastly upon them, may see them fade and wither like a flower, yea they seeme to fade by his looking or fixing his eye on them.

Hence note.

First, *The flesh of man is a very fading and declining thing.*

It quickly consumes and drips away in a disease; A violent feaver or any other acute disease, dries up the spirits, and drinkes up

up the moysture, and how soone doth such a man decay! and as the extremity of a disease, so extreame want of food or famine consumes the flesh. Hunger having nothing to eate, feeds upon the flesh of the hungry, till all be eaten up. We read (*Lam:* 4.8.) how rudely famine dealt with the flesh of those delicate *Nazarites, who were purer then snow, whiter then milke, they were more ruddy in body then rubyes, their polishing was of Saphire*; yet the next words tell us, *Their visage is blacker then a coale, they are not knowne in the streets, their skin cleaveth to their bones: it is withered, it is become like a sticke.* And though a man escape sickness, and famine doth not eate up his flesh, yet time (that great eater) will, old age will wast what famine and sickness have not toucht. As the Prophet threatned, what the Caterpillar hath left, the Canker-worme shall devoure; so what sickness leaves, time will certainly consume. Thus bodily flesh is every way liable to a consumption; and therefore the Prophet being commanded to cry, and putting the question, what shall I cry, had this answer, *All flesh is grasse.* (There indeed *flesh* is taken in the most comprehensive notion, as to all externalls; not only the flesh of the body, but all the riches, honours, and dignities of this world, come under the name of flesh there) *All flesh is grasse* (Isa: 40. 6.) But why doth he call it grasse? 'Tis so under a two-fold consideration. First, for the greenenesse and faireneſse of it. God hath put beauty upon this fading flesh, both for the comfort, and for the tryall of man; that flesh is faire as a flower, is matter of delight; and to abstract our thoughts or weane our hearts from that which is faire and delightfull, is matter of tryall. How hardly are we taken off from affecting flesh, our owne or others, while this grasse continues beautifull and greene! Secondly, Flesh is grasse, because soone gone (as it followeth in the Prophet) *The grasse withereth and the flower fadeth, because the Spirit of the Lord* (or his *breath* like a blasting East winde) *bloweth upon it*; Which yet some expound more spiritually, of the Spirit of God discovering the vanity and mutability of all earthly things to the soule, for that presently causeth the gayest and best of them to wither or be as a withered flower before our eyes. In which sense *David* sayd (*Psal:* 119. 96.) *I have seene an end of all perfection.* Take flesh in the largest sense, and 'tis a consuming thing; *The fashion* (or scheame) *of the world passeth away*, and so doth the fashion of all

thoſe perfections, or moſt perfect enjoyments, which are but of a worldly birth and extraction. Fleſh under every forme is a fading thing, eſpecially the fleſh of the beſt-form'd face & body of man. Whence take theſe ſix inferences. If the fleſh the faireſt outſide of man be a fading thing, then

First, Be not deſirous, much leſſe ambitious, *to make a faire ſhew in the fleſh*; for it may prove but a vaine ſhew, and at laſt, not ſo much as a ſhew. Fleſh may ſo conſume away, that it cannot be ſeene. When the Apoſtle tells us of ſome, *who deſire to make a faire ſhew in the fleſh* (Gal: 6. 12.) he ſpecially meanes it of thoſe that brave it and boaſt themſelves in the outward part of religion, and would appear much in the forme; *'Tis a moſt vaine thing to deſire, to make a faire ſhew in the fleſh of ſpirituall things, as hypocrites and formaliſts doe*; And 'tis a very vaine thing to deſire to make a faire ſhew in the fleſh of corporall things, as proud and vain-glorious men love to doe. Many deſire to make a faire ſhew in the fleſh of their bodyes, they love to have faire faces, and faire skins, to be fairely dreſt and deckt, is a great part of their care. But take heed of deſiring to make a faire ſhew in this or in any thing that is called fleſh. For when you have done all, fleſh will be a nothing; And after you have beſtowed much coſt upon the fleſh of this body, that it may be ſeene, a ſickneſs may come and conſume it, that it cannot be ſeene.

Secondly, Take heed of priding your ſelves in the fleſh, when your fleſh (poſſibly unſought by you) makes a faire ſhew; Though you have beauty, and the goodlieſt ſtructure of body that ever was ſeene, though you have riches and honour, the higheſt built eſtate that ever was enjoyed, what have you to be proud of? will it not conſume and moulder away? may it not melt like a ſnow-ball, or like wax before the fire? be not proud of any thing called fleſh, how goodly a ſight ſoever it is to the world, for in a little, in a very little time, there may be nothing of fleſh left in ſight. *His fleſh is conſumed away, that it cannot be ſeene.*

Thirdly, Be not over-carefull to provide for your fleſh, the outward man, this body, or any thing that concernes it. As the Apoſtle utterly forbids us to *make proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfill the luſts thereof* (Rom: 13. 14.) that is, thoſe luſts that are exerciſed in the fleſh; ſo, be not much carefull, not at all unduely care-

carefull to make proviſion for your fleſh, to ſatisfie the neceſſities of it; for 'tis but a periſhing thing. Be not carefull what you ſhall eate and drinke, and wherewith you ſhall be clothed, as Chriſt himſelfe adviſeth (*Math: 6.*) The fleſh that you prepare for your fleſh, is not more periſhing then the fleſh for which it is prepared. *Meates for the belly and the belly for meates, but God ſhall deſtroy both it and them* (1 Cor: 6. 13.) It will not be long before there ſhall be an end both of the meate that is eaten, and of eating meate.

Fourthly, If the fleſh may ſoone be ſo conſumed by the hand of God that it cannot be ſeene, then be not unwilling to waſt and conſume your fleſh which is ſeen in working for God, or in doing good worke, which is the worke of God: your fleſh may conſume upon worſe termes quickly, then working for God, why then ſhould you be unwilling to conſume it in Gods worke? Are not ſome ſo tender of their carkaſſe, and their skin, that they are afraid (though that feare be their ſhame and ſin) of taking too much paines in the worke of God, leſt they ſhould dammage their bodyes, endanger their health, and conſume their fleſh? This fleſh will waſt with idleneſs, is it not better to waſt it by induſtry in uſefull ſervices? The Apoſtle was willing *to ſpend and be ſpent* in the ſervice of the *Corinthians*; That is, he was willing to ſpend not only his purſe and his paines, but to be ſpent as to his bodyly ſtrength, health and life. He cared not for his owne fleſh, ſo he might be ſerviceable to their ſpirits, and promote their ſpirituall good, (2 *Cor:* 12. 15.)

Fifthly, Be not unwilling to waſte and conſume your fleſh in duty with God; as the fleſh conſumes in work for God, ſo in duty with God, in prayer and faſting and ſelfe-humbling, theſe are duties with God. Some are afraid of taking too much paines in theſe ſoule-workes with God, leſt they hurt their bodies, their fleſh. We can never lay out our ſtrength, or bring our fleſh to a better market, we can never put it off at a higher rate (if it muſt be put off) then in wayes of communion with God. Yet let us remember we have a promiſe, that our bodyes ſhall thrive as well as our ſoules, even in thoſe duties of communion with God, which are moſt expenſive and ſevere to our fleſh, prayer with faſting. (*Iſa:* 58. 61.) *And the Lord ſhall guide thee continually, and ſatisfie thy ſoule in drought, and make fat thy bones.* Which though it

it may have a more ſpirituall meaning, yet there is a truth in it as to the poynt in hand. Holy Faſting, which is a *ſoule-fatning* duty (as all agree) is under a gracious promiſe, that it ſhall alſo be a *body-fatning*, yea a *bone-fatning* duty. Now, though we have a good aſſurance, that while we are trading with God for the gaine and encreaſe of our ſoules, our bodyes ſhall not waſte nor be looſers, yet we ſhould be ready to waſte and weare off the fleſh from our bodyes for the gaine and encreaſe of our ſoules.

Sixthly, Why ſhould we be unwilling to offer our fleſh to be conſumed by the fury of men, or by the rage of flames in the cauſe of God, ſeeing it may ere long conſume by ſickneſs and not be ſeene? why ſhould we be afraid to let our fleſh conſume or rot in priſons, or by tortures for Chriſt, ſeeing a diſeaſe will doe it, and hath often done it? Thouſands of the bleſſed Martyrs, and ſuffering Saints, have rejoyced they had fleſh to conſume when God called them to it. So ſome interpret that Scripture before mentioned (*2 Cor:* 12. 14.) where the Apoſtle profeſſed, *I am willing to be ſpent for you* (how ſpent? as an offering or ſacrifice by fire) *in the ſervice of your faith*, and in bearing my witneſs to thoſe truths of the Goſpel which I have preached to you. And indeed, he in that ſenſe, ſpent his fleſh at the laſt, he ſuffered death, and let his fleſh fall, in holding up and holding out the faith of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. It is better that our fleſh ſhould be thus conſumed (if God call us to it) then that we leave it to be conſumed by age or ſickneſs, by wormes or rottenneſs. How freely ſhould we offer up this fleſh to ſo noble a conſumption, ſeeing we cannot keepe it long from ſo meane a conſumption, doe what we can?

Secondly, Note.

Sickneſs is a conſumer; ſickneſs is a conſumer of all that will conſume.

It conſumes the body, and it conſumes the purſe, yea it conſumes all our worldly comforts and concernments, it conſumes every thing but grace. We ſay, *A time of ſickneſs is a ſpending time*; the uſuall reference of that expreſſion, is to ſpirituals. In health we gather grace and lay up truths, which we ſpend in ſickneſs. But though ſickneſs be a ſpending time, yet, it is not (I am ſure it ought not to be) a waſting time to grace and ſpirituals.

A ſpending time it is, that is, a time wherein a godly man may lay out a great deale of his ſpirituall ſtock and heavenly treaſure, a great deale of faith and patience, a great deale of ſweet contentation and ſelfe-ſubmiſſion to God. But ſickneſs is not a waſting time to any of theſe graces or heavenly treaſures; yea where grace is reall and active, it is not only not waſted or conſumed, but encreaſed and improved, occaſionally, by ſickneſs; God having promiſed, *that all things ſhall worke together for good to them that love him* (Rom: 8. 28.) will not ſuffer the beſt things of thoſe that love him (their graces) to take hurt by the worſt of bodyly ſickneſſes. Sickneſs doth only dammage the body, and deface the beauty of the fleſh; and it quickly doth, as *Elihu* affirmes of his ſick man in the text, *His fleſh is conſumed away, that it cannot be ſeene*, yea, as it followeth

And his bones that were not ſeene, ſtick out.

Fleſh and bones are the two eminent materialls of this faire and moſt regular building, The Body of man. The Bones of a healthy and ſtrong man, are not ſeene becauſe they are covered with fleſh; they are only felt or perceived through their clothing, skin, and fleſh. God hath put theſe very comely and beautifull garments as a covering upon our bones: but ſickneſs pulls away theſe coverings, it pulls away the cloaths from our bones, and makes them appeare, as it were, naked. When the fat is dript away, and the fleſh is ſpent, the bones ſeeme to ſtart out. We commonly ſay of a man that hath been conſumed by a lingring ſickneſs, *He is a very Skelleton, he lookes like an Anatomy*, which is nothing elſe but a pack of bones, the fleſh is gone. Thus *David* mourned (*Pſal:* 31. 10.) *My life is ſpent with griefe, my yeares with ſighing, my ſtrength faileth becauſe of mine iniquity: and my bones are conſumed.* The ſin-ſickneſs of a ſenſible ſoule conſumes the bones, more then any bodyly ſickneſs. This was not only the conſuming but the breaking of *Davids* bones (*Pſal:* 51. 8.) And as his ſorrow for his owne tranſgreſſions, ſo his ſorrow for the afflictions of *Sion*, had the like effect in him (*Pſal:* 102. 3, 4, 5.) *My dayes are conſumed like ſmoake or into ſmoake* (they vaniſh like ſmoake) *and my bones are burnt as a hearth. My heart is ſmitten, and withereth like graſſe; ſo that I forget to eate my bread; By reaſon of the voyce of my groaning, my bones cleave to my skin.*

Some-

Et comminuentur oſſa ejus, non videntur; interpretantes vocem ספה in ſignificatione Syriaca. Piſc. *Significationē Syriacam malo quam omnes penè hebræi ſequuntur.* Merc:

Some read this Text, *His bones are diminiſhed*, leſſened, waſted, or broken in pieces, as if the conſumption reached not only his fleſh but his bones too. That's a fierce diſeaſe which at once invadeth and waſteth the bones. The word which we render to *ſtick out*, ſignifieth in the Syriack Idiom, the abating leſſening or breaking of any thing into leſſer parts or pieces. And ſo thoſe words (*are not ſeen*) in the text (which according to our tranſlation refer to the time of health, when a man is ſo fat and full fleſhed, that his bones cannot be ſeen, ſcarcely felt, thoſe words I ſay) are referred according to this tranſlation to the time of ſickneſs, which is ſuppoſed ſo to diminiſh and waſt the bones, that by an ordinary ſtraine of Rhetorick they are ſaid, not to *be ſeen*. *His bones are diminiſhed, they are not ſeen.* We alſo render this word in that firſt propheticall word concerning our reſtoring by Chriſt (*Gen.* 3. 15.) by *bruiſing*. *It* (that is the womans ſeed) *ſhall bruiſe thy head* (that is the Devills) *and thou ſhalt bruiſe his heele.* When bones are bruiſed, and as it were ſhuffled together, they cannot be ſeen in their proper places, or as once they were fixt by nature. This various reading doth not vary the generall ſence of the Text, but only heighten and encreaſe it. We render fully and ſignificantly, *his bones that were not ſeen, ſtick out.*

Hence note.

There is no man ſo ſtrong, there is nothing in man ſo ſtrong that can ſtand out againſt the ſtrength of ſickneſs.

Our bones are not made of braſſe, ſickneſs will diminiſh them, and pain maſter them.

Secondly, Whereas 'tis ſaid, *His fleſh* (*that was ſeen*) *is not ſeen, and his bones that were not ſeen ſtick out*, or are ſeen.

Obſerve.

Sickneſſe makes a wonderfull change in man.

It puts that out of ſight which was ſeen, and it brings that in ſight which was not ſeen; This holds true, not only as to that which is naturall in man, his fleſh and bones, of which this text treats in the letter; but 'tis true alſo as to that which is morall and ſpirituall in man, his virtues and his vices, his graces, and his luſts or corruptions. How often is the fleſh (in a morall ſence) that is,

is, the outward profeſſion of a hypocrite conſumed in ſickneſs, and no more ſeen; *will the hypocrite alwayes call upon God?* (Job 27. 10.) He will not. He that doth all to be ſeen (that's the character of a hypocrite (*Math.* 6. 5.) will in a little time doe ſuch a little or rather ſuch a nothing in Religion, that it cannot be ſeen at all. His profeſſion is ſick, when he is ſick; and then alſo that which was not ſeen ſticks out; the hypocrite covereth many of his corruptions, his impatiency, murmuring, and unbelief, in a day of proſperity with the skin at leſt or fair ſhew of faith, but in a day of trouble thoſe dead bones appear, and ſtick out. A day of ſorrow, ſickneſſe, and trouble is a great diſcoverer; it occaſions the appearance and ſticking out of many baſe luſts that were not ſeen before. 'Tis ſo alſo in the better way with godly men, their corruptions, that appeared upon them before, are abated, waſted, and conſumed by affliction, and many of their graces which lay hid and unſeen, ſtick out and appear glorioufly in a day of trouble, or upon a ſick bed. Their patience & ſubmiſſion of ſpirit under the hand of God, their long-ſufferance and ſweet ſelf-reſignation to the will of God, which lay hid, ſhew themſelves. Sickneſſe and affliction make wonderfull changes and diſcoveries both as to the outward and inward man; *'tis ſeldome ſeen or known either how good or how bad any man is, till he is in paine or reduced to ſome extreamity*; till his very bones are vexed, or till, as *Elihu* further deſcribes the ſick man in the next verſe.

Verſ. 22. *His ſoul draweth nigh to the grave, and his life to the deſtroyer.*

When the diſeaſe is at the height (as Phyſitians ſpeak) then the ſick mans ſoul draweth nigh unto and is ready to goe downe into the grave. But doth the ſoul goe to the grave? I anſwer, the ſoul, here, as frequently in Scripture, is put for the perſon; as if he had ſaid, *the man draweth nigh to his grave*; The ſoul being the nobleſt and moſt princely part of man, is honoured with the denomination of the whole man; or, becauſe all the world is nothing to us (as Chriſt told his Diſciples (*Math.* 16. 26.) if we loſe our ſouls, therefore man is ſpoken of as if he were nothing but a ſoul (*Gen.* 14. 21.) *The King of Sodom ſaid unto Abram, give me the ſouls, and take the goods to thy ſelf*, we tranſlate, give

give me the perſons, and put in the Margin, *give me the ſouls*; Thus 'tis ſaid (*Gen.* 46. 27.) *All the ſouls of the houſe of Jacob that came into Egypt were threeſcore and ten.* The Apoſtles rule of obedience to Magiſtrates runs in this ſtraine, *Let every ſoul* (that is, let every man) *be ſubject to the higher Powers* (Rom. 13.) And I conceive the Apoſtle expreſſeth it ſo, becauſe there ought to be an inward ſubjection to that, as to any other Ordinance of God; the ſoul muſt be ſubject as well as the body to the powers of this world, that is, there muſt be (though no ſubjection of conſcience, yet) a conſcientious ſubjection unto Magiſtrates. Thus here, *his ſoul* that is, himſelf, the man *draweth neer*

Unto the grave; to *corruption*, ſay ſome, *to the pit*, ſay others.

לשחת *Corruptioni ſepulchrum a græcis vocatur* Sarcophagus.

Both are joyned or meete in the grave, for that is the pit of corruption. The Greeks call the grave *Fleſh-eater*, *to draw nigh to the grave*, imports ſuch a prevalency of diſeases as bring a man to the graves mouth, to the very poynt of death; and then (as we ſay) *he is drawing on*. Whither is a ſick man drawing on? ſurely to his grave; *David* (*Pſal.* 107. 18.) having deſcribed the condition of ſick men, adds, *they draw nigh unto the gates of death*; Here (which is the ſame) *Elihu* ſaith, *his ſoul draweth near to the grave.*

Hence note.

Diſeaſes and death are near one another.

A ſick bed and a grave are not far diſtant; *David* ſpeaking of himſelf and others in extreame danger of death by the cruell plots and cunning ſnares of the enemy, hath a like expreſſion (*Pſal.* 141. 7.) *Our bones are ſcattered at the graves mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth*; as if he had ſaid, we are ſo near death, that 'tis a miracle if we eſcape it. Though we are yet alive, yet we have the ſentence of death in our ſelves, and are within ſight of our graves. What *David* ſpake there of himſelf in conſort with others, *Heman* ſpake perſonally of himſelf (*Pſal.* 88. 3.) *My life draweth nigh unto the grave*; We are alwayes in our health drawing towards the grave, but in ſickneſs we are drawing near unto it. There is but a little diſtance between any man and the grave, there is ſcarcely any diſtance at all between

tween a man that is very ſick and the grave. Now if the ſick man be drawing near unto the grave, then

Firſt, Let them that are ſick remember the grave; 'tis our duty to be alwayes remembring and meditating upon the grave in our health, much more ſhould that be our remembrance & meditation, when we are ſick, moſt of all when we are ſick unto death, or ready to dye and drop into the grave.

Secondly, If the ſick are drawing neare unto the grave, then let ſick men draw near unto God; if ever you will draw near unto God, the living God, be ſure to doe it upon the borders of death; 'tis good yea beſt to draw nigh unto God when we are well, and all is well with us, even at beſt in the world (*Pſal.* 73. 25.) But when we are in danger or drawing nigh unto death, O how earneſtly ſhould we draw nigh unto God, in the actings of faith, and love; *To whom ſhould we goe* (as *Peter* ſaid to Chriſt, *Joh.* 6. 68.) in the appearances and approaches of temporall death, but unto him who hath the words of eternall life. It is high time for us to draw nigh unto God, when any of the comforts of this life are withdrawing from us, is it not more then high time therefore, to draw nigh to him, when life it ſelfe is withdrawing from us, and we drawing nigh to the grave! *How miſerable is their condition who have death near them, and God far from them. Though we walke through the valley of the ſhadow of death, yet* (as *David* profeſſed he would not, *Pſal.* 23. 4.) we need not *feare any ill, while God is with us*; but how will the very ſhadowes of death put us in feare, if God be not with us? and what confidence can we have of his being with us, if we are not acquainted with him, if we uſe not to draw neare to him?

Thirdly, If they that are ſick draw near unto the grave, then it is good for ſuch as come to viſit their ſick friends, wiſely to mind them of the grave; when will a diſcourſe with our friends of death and the grave be ſeaſonable, if not when we ſee them dying and going to the grave? yet ſome, when they viſit ſick friends, will not ſpeak a word of either; they fear it may haſten death to hear of it, & that ſpeaking of the grave may put them into it, then which I know no fear more fooliſh, or more to be feared. Yea ſome will forbid viſiters to mention death, when their Relations lye ſick, O doe not ſpeak of death to my Husband, ſaith the Wife, &c. But remember it, if the ſick are drawing near to the grave,

they that viſit them ſhould remember them of the grave, both in prayer and in conference; to ſpeak of death cannot hurt the body, but the not ſpeaking of it may hurt the ſoul, and hinder it from getting out of the ſnares both of ſpirituall and eternall death. Yet godly prudence and great caution is to be uſed about it; none ſhould doe it bluntly, nor ſuddenly, but having by diſcreet inſinuations, firſt hinted to the ſick man his danger of death, we ſhould then by faithfull counſells prepare him for it, and by comfortable Scripture cordialls ſtrengthen and arme his ſpirits againſt it. Such ſavoury and well mannaged diſcourſes of death may (through the bleſſing of God) be a ſavour of eternall life to the ſick man, and will not in the leaſt prejudice his recovery from ſickneſs, *when his ſoul draweth near to the grave,*

And his life to the deſtroyers.

[illegible] *Pſalmi-bus.* Mont: The Hebrew is, *to thoſe that kill*, or *to life deſtroyers*. There is a difference among Interpreters, who are here intended by theſe Deſtroyers, to whom the ſick mans life draweth near, or who are theſe *life deſtroyers*.

Firſt, ſome thus, *his life to the deſtroyers*, that is, to his enemies that are ready to deſtroy him. But that's improper to the text, which ſpeaking of ſickneſs cannot intend any deſtroying enemy but the laſt enemy which is to be deſtroyed, *death*, or the antecedents and uſuall attendants of it, ſickneſſes.

Ad Angelos morti præfectos non incommodè referuntur ſequentis verſiculi ratione habita, ubi Angeli vitam annunciantis unius de mille mentionem facit, ut ממיתים *intelligas mortis nuncios.* Merc: Secondly, by the deſtroyers others underſtand, *Angells*, who are commiſſion'd and ſent of God to cut the thread of life, and to take mortalls out of this world by mortall diſeaſes; and ſo the deſtroying Angell in this verſe ſtands in oppoſition to that comforting Angell ſpoken of in the next verſe; *if there be a meſſenger or an Angell*, &c. That Angells have ſuch a Miniſtry, is clear, (2 *Sam.* 24. 16.) Where (*David* having choſen to fall into the hands of God) an Angell is preſently diſpatcht to doe execution upon his people. *And when the Angell ſtretched out his hand upon Jeruſalem to deſtroy it, the Lord repented him of the evill, and ſaid to the Angell that deſtroyed the people, it is enough, ſtay now thine hand*, &c. That *deſtroyer* (ſo he is called, *Exod.* 12. 23.) who ſlew all the firſt borne of the *Egyptians* (Gods laſt and greateſt plague upon them, his tenth plague) is by moſt interpreted to be an Angell, yea by ſome a good Angell, becauſe appointed and

and directed by God to ſpare his people the Jewes, and to poure out his vengeance upon the *Egyptians*, his and their enemies. For moſt uſually the wicked are plagued by good Angells, and the good, as *Job* in this book was, are afflicted by evill Angells. Howbeit that text ſay ſome (*Pſal.* 78. 49.) leadeth us rather to beleeve that it was an evill Angell; *He caſt upon them* (meaning the *Egyptians*) *the fierceneſſe of his anger, wrath, indignation, and trouble, by ſending evill Angells among them.* Yet poſſibly thoſe Angells which deſtroyed the *Egyptians*, are called evill Angells, not becauſe they were ſo in their nature, but becauſe they were Miniſters of evill to that hard-hearted people. Which way ſoever we take it, there is a truth in it applicable to the Scripture here in hand. And ſo ſome expound that of *Solomon* (*Prov.* 17. 11.) *An evill man ſeeketh only rebellion, therefore a cruell Meſſenger ſhall be ſent againſt him.* The text may be rendred *a cruell Angell*, that is, an Angell with a Meſſage of wrath and deſtruction ſhall be ſent unto him; The Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 10. 10.) ſpeaking of thoſe dreadfull judgments, which God ſent upon his people the Jewes in the Wilderneſſe (ſuch as we are like to find in theſe Goſpell times, if we provoke him, for all thoſe things are ſaid *to have happened unto them for Types or examples* (*verſ.* 11.) And there he gives us warning, *neither murmure ye, as ſome of them alſo murmured, and were deſtroyed of the deſtroyer*. That is, by the Peſtilence or Plague (as 'tis expreſſed, *Numb.* 14. 12, 37.) which the Apoſtle *Paul* calleth a *deſtroyer*, becauſe, doubtleſs it was executed by ſome inviſible deſtroyer, or Angell. The Devill, whom *John* in the *Revelation* (*Chap.* 9. 11.) calleth, *the Angell of the bottomleſſe pit*, is there alſo ſet forth by this Title, *whoſe name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon*. The Devill is the *Apollyon*, the *Abaddon*, both which ſignifie a deſtroyer; yea the Devill (*Heb.* 2. 14.) *is ſaid to have the power of death*, as if he were ſet over that ſad work, and Lorded it over dying men; yet (let us know to our comfort) the Devill hath not the power of death as a Lord, or Judge, but only as an Executioner; thus the ſick mans life may be ſaid to draw nigh to the deſtroyer, that is to the deſtroying Angell; or to the meſſenger of death.

Thirdly, we may take the *deſtroyers*, not for perſons ſent to deſtroy, but for diſeaſes, and ſickneſſes; theſe are deſtroyers. And thus

thus it may be ſaid of a ſick man, *his life draweth nigh to the deſtroyers*, that is, he is in the hand or under the power of ſuch diſeaſes, as probably will deſtroy him. That ſeems to be Mr. *Broughtons* underſtanding of the words, who renders, *his ſoul draweth nigh to the grave, and his life to killing maladies*. Whatſoever is a *death-bringer*, whatever is deadly or mortall to man, may be comprehended under this expreſſion, *The Deſtroyers*. And ſo, theſe words, *His life draweth nigh to the deſtroyer*, may ſignifie only thus much, he is deadly, or (as we commonly expreſſe it) mortally ſick. There's no hopes of him, he is paſt recovery, the Phyſitians have given him over. *Heman* (*Pſal.* 88. 3, 4, 5.) ſpeaks to this ſence and near in this language of himſelf. *My ſoul is full of troubles: my life draweth nigh unto the grave. I am counted with them that goe down into the pit: I am as a man that hath no ſtrength. Free among the dead, like the ſlaine that lye in the grave whom thou remembreſt no more. Heman* was alive, yet with reſpect either to the anguiſh of his ſoul, or the pains of his body, he looked upon himſelf as one *free among the dead*, that is, *as a dead man, his life drew near to the deſtroyers*. And hence

Præſtat generale eſt et ad omnia mortis ſigna et mortifera, quicquid illud ſit reſerve. Merc:

Fourthly, Others read the words not in an active ſence, (as we) *Deſtroyers*, but in a paſſive, *His life draweth nigh to thoſe who are deſtroyed* or *dead*. Dying men are ſo neere to, that they may be reckoned as *dead men*. That word of encouragement in the Prophet (*Iſa.* 41. 14.) Which we render, *Feare not thou worme Jacob, and ye men* (or as we put in the Margin *Few men*) *of Iſrael*, is rendred by ſome others, *Feare not thou worme Jacob; and ye that are dead of Iſrael*, that is, who are (in your owne fearefull apprehenſions or in the opinion of your proud and prepotent enemies) as dead men, or nigh unto death; or (as we may expound it by that of *Paul* concerning himſelfe and his Fellow-Apoſtles, with reſpect to the continuall hazzard of their lives 1 *Cor.* 4. 9.) men, *as it were, appoynted unto death*; yea, as the learned in the Hebrew language tell us, the word tranſlated in the Prophet *men*, with the change but of one poynt, and that only in the poſition of it, ſignifieth properly, *dead men*. We find the word applyed ſpecially to wicked worldly men (*Pſal.* 17. 14.) who are there called *the hand of God* (to afflict or take away the lives of Godly men) and are ſayd *to have their portion in this life*; the word, I ſay, is applyed to them, as implying, that how much ſoever

מוֹת מִיתִי *hæc vox ex eo nata videtur, quod ſimus mortis ſubjecti*; Ita et a Græcis βροτὸς et a Latinis *mortalis uſurpatur.* Martyn:

ſoever they rejoyce, either in the preſent enjoyments of this naturall life, or in the hopes of a long naturall life in this world, yet they alwayes are within one poynt (or pricke with a pen which is the ſhorteſt imaginable ſpace) of death. In which ſenſe alſo St *Paul* ſpeaking of the different ſtate of the body now in this life and after the reſurrection from the dead, ſaith (1 *Cor.* 15. 54.) *When this mortall ſhall have put on immortality*; that is, when we, who now live in dying bodyes, or in bodyes bearing the markes or tokens of death, and looking like dead men, ſhall have put on the beautifull and glorious robes of immortality, *Then ſhall be brought to paſſe the ſaying that is written, Death ſhall be ſwallowed up in victory*. Whereas now death which is ready enough to get the victory over healthy and ſtrong men, is ſo ready to get the victory over weake and ſicke men, that their life may very well be ſayd (according to this fourth and laſt interpretation) *to draw nigh to the deſtroyed, or thoſe that are already dead*. Thus if in ſtead of Death-Bringers or deſtroyers we read Deſtroyed or thoſe that have been brought to death, the meaning of *Elihu* in this paſſage is plaine and eaſie; importing the ſicke man ſo ſicke, that there is ſcarce a ſtep or but a poynt between him and thoſe who are actually dead.

But whether we take the word in this paſſive ſence, and tranſlate *The Deſtroyed*, or in the active, as we, and tranſlate *deſtroyers*, thereby underſtanding either Angels in ſpeciall, or diſeaſes in Generall ſent by God to deſtroy or take away the life of the ſicke man; which way ſoever of theſe, I ſay, we expound the word, it yeilds a cleare ſence as to the ſcope of the text, and as to the truth of it, (upon the matter) the very ſame. *His life draweth nigh to the deſtroyers.*

Hence note.

First, *Diſeaſes are deſtroyers.*

Either they themſelves deſtroy when they come, or the deſtroyer comes with them. (*Pſal.* 90. 3.) *Thou turneſt man to deſtruction and ſayeſt, returne ye children of men.* 'Tis a Pſalme penned by *Moſes* lamenting the frailety of mankinde. He lived to ſee all *Iſrael*, whom under his hand and conduct God brought out of *Egypt*, dye, except that renowned two, *Caleb* and *Joſhua*; And therefore he having ſeene the great deſtruction of that people:

ple for their murmurings and unbeliefe, for their ten-fold provocations in the wilderneſs, might ſay from his owne experience more then moſt men to that poynt of mans mortality. And as God turned that people to deſtruction, and ſayd according to that irrevocable ſentence (*Gen:* 3. 19.) *Returne ye children of men* to your originall and firſt materiall, *duſt*; ſo he ſaith the ſame to men every day, who as they are duſt, ſo we ſee them returning to their duſt. Every diſeaſe, if ſo commiſſion'd by God, is death, and every paine (if he ſay it) the period of our lives.

Againe, *Elihu* is here ſpeaking of a man whom the Lord is but trying, teaching, and inſtructing upon his ſick bed; yet he ſaith, *His ſoule is drawing neere to the grave, and his life to the deſtroyers.*

Hence obſerve.

Thoſe afflictions which are but for inſtruction, may looke like thoſe which are for deſtruction.

When the Lord hath a purpoſe only to try a man, he often acts towards him as if he would kill him. If any ſhall ſay, this is hard, I anſwer; *A ruffe horſe muſt have a ruffe rider.* Ruffe wood will not cleave without a beetle and wedges. We put God to uſe extremities, that he may bring us to a moderation. Our ſpirits are often ſo ruffe and head-ſtrong, that they muſt be kept in with bit and bridle; they are ſo tough and knotty that there's no working, no cleaving of them till the Lord ſets his wedges to us, and layes on with his beetle of heavieſt and hardeſt afflictions; In a word, we even compell him to bring us to deaths-doore, that he may teach us to live.

Now ſeeing paines and ſickneſſes (of which *Elihu* ſpeakes as the way and meanes by which God ſpeakes to ſinfull man) are accompanied with ſuch dreadfull ſymptomes and effects, loathing and loſſe of appetite, conſumption of the fleſh, and the breaking of the very bones, the ſoule drawing neere to the grave, and life to the deſtroyers; ſeeing I ſay, there are ſuch ſad effects of ſickneſſe, remember,

Firſt, *Health is worth the praying to God for.*

Secondly, *Health is worth the praiſing of God for*; and that conſidered, either, firſt, as continued, or, ſecondly, as reſtored. 'Tis a mercy not to be pained, not to be ſicke; 'tis a more ſenſible, though not a greater mercy to be freed from paine, and recovered out of ſickneſs. While we are kept free from paines and ſickneſſes, how thankfull ſhould we be; and when we are freed from and brought out of the bonds of bodily paine and ſickneſſes, how ſoule-ſicke, yea how dead are we if we are not thankfull!

Thirdly, Seeing paines and ſickneſſes are ſuch ſad afflictions; be wiſe and careſull for the preſervation of your health; doe not throw away your health upon a luſt, doe not expoſe your ſelves to laſting paines and pining ſickneſſes, for the ſatisfying of a wanton ſenſuall appetite. The health and ſtrength of this frayle body, are of more value then ten thouſand of thoſe vaniſhing delights. Yet how many are there, who run themſelves to the graves mouth, and into the thickeſt throngs of thoſe deſtroyers, for the taking up of ſuch pitifull and periſhing delights? who to pleaſe their fleſh for a few moments in ſurfeiting, drunkenneſs, and wantonneſs, bring many dayes, yea moneths and yeares of paine and torment upon their fleſh? yea and not only ſhorten (I meane as to what they might probably have had by the courſe of nature) the number of their dayes, but ſuddenly end & extinguiſh them. It hath been ſayd of old, *Gluttony kills more men then the ſword*; that is, it caſts them into killing diſeaſes. 'Tis a *maxime* in warre; *Starve your enemy if you can rather then fight him; cut his throat without a knife, deſtroy him without drawing a ſword*; that is, with *hunger*. Some are indeed deſtroyed with hunger, and hunger, if not relieved, will deſtroy any man! Yet ſurfeiting deſtroyeth more then hunger, and 'tis a more quicke and ſpeedy deſtroyer. We have knowne many who have cut their owne throats, by cutting too much and too faſt for their bellyes; Pampering the Body deſtroyeth more bodies then ſtarving. Many while they draw nigh to their Tables, their ſoules (as *Elihu* here ſaith) *are drawing neere to the grave, and their life to the deſtroyers.* Therefore, remember and conſider, O ye that are men given to appetite, (as *Solomon* calleth ſuch, *Pro:* 23. 2.) or rather as the Hebrew elegancy there hath it, *ye that are Maſters of appetite*, ſtudying your Bellyes, till indeed ye are maſtered by appetite, to you, I ſay, remember and conſider, *Health is more then meate, and life then dainty faire.* All the content that intemperance can give you, cannot recompence you for the paines that ſickneſs will give you; you

you may have pleaſure for an houre or two, and ſickneſs for a moneth or two, for a yeare or two. And if all the pleaſure we take in ſatisfying that which though it may be glutted, yet will not be ſatisfied, a luſt, cannot recompence the paines that are found in a ſick bed for a few dayes, moneths or yeares, how will it recompence any for thoſe everlaſting paines that are found in hell, where the damned ſhall be alwayes converſing with death and deſtruction, and yet never dye nor be deſtroyed.

Fourthly, Foraſmuch as ſickneſs is often accompanied with ſuch grievous dolours and racking tortures, let the ſick pray much that they may be armed with patience; who knows what tryalls and extremities ſickneſs may bring him to? Though the beginnings and firſt appearances of it are but ſmall, like the cloud which firſt appeared to the ſervant of *Eliah*, onely of a handsbreadth, yea though it begin but with the little finger of the hand, yet as that little cloud did the whole face of the heaven, ſo this little diſtemper may over-ſpread the whole body, and put you to the exerciſe of all your patience: it may hang and encreaſe upon you, till it hath broken your bones, and conſumed your fleſh, and brought you to the graves mouth, therefore pray for patience.

Laſtly, Let not the ſtrong man glory in his ſtrength, nor the healthy man in his health; ſickneſſe may come ſhortly, and then how ſtrong ſoever any man is, downe he muſt, and lye by it. There's no wreſtling away ſickneſs any way (if God ſend it and bid it come) but by wreſtling with God (as *Jacob* did, *Gen.* 32.) in prayer. If you thinke to wreſtle away bodily ſickneſs by bodily ſtrength and ſtriving with it, you will be throwne and get the fall. Who can ſtand before a ſcaver, or a conſumption, when they arreſt us in the name of the Great King, and carry us priſoners to our beds? Therefore let no man glory in his ſtrength, if any man doe, it ſhewes at preſent his morall weakneſs; and his naturall weakneſs may quickly teach him another leſſon, and ſpoyle his glorying.

JOB,

JOB. Chap. 33. Verſ. 23, 24, 25, 26.

If there be a meſſenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thouſand, to ſhew unto man his uprightneſs:

Then he is gracious unto him, and ſaith, Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ranſome.

His fleſh ſhall be freſher then a childes: he ſhall return to the dayes of his youth.

He ſhall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him, and he ſhall ſee his face with joy: for he will render to man his righteouſneſs.

THeſe words hold forth the third way by which God ſpeakes or reveales himſelfe to man, and recovers him out of his ſin. As if *Elihu* had ſaid; *When God hath brought a man to his ſick bed, and he yet continueth in his blindneſs, not perceiving either his owne errour, or the purpoſe and intention of God to him; If then beſides all this God ſo order the matter, that in his mercifull providence he provideth for his further inſtruction, and ſends a ſpeciall meſſenger (as he doth me to thee) an interpreter (which is a ſingular favour of God) to explain, and expound the meaning of his dealings with him, and what his owne condition is, to bring him to a true ſight and ſence of his ſin, and to ſet him upright in the ſights of God, by the actings of faith and repentance; this ſoone altereth the caſe, and hereupon God is preſently appeaſed towards him. Then he is gracious, and then many bleſſed fruits and effects of his grace doe follow, and are heaped on him.* Here, therefore, we have a very illuſtrious inſtance of Gods loving kindneſs to poore ſinfull man, recovering and fetching him backe (when he is as it were halfe dead) from the gates of death, reſtoring him both as to ſoule and body, putting him into a perfect (ſo farre as on this ſide heaven it may be called perfect) ſtate, and giving him indeed what he can reaſonably deſire of him. In the context of theſe foure verſes, Conſider

 Firſt,

First, The inſtrument, or meanes by which God brings this about, and that is, by ſending a meſſenger, or a choice interpreter to the ſick mans bed, to counſel and adviſe him. *Verſ.* 23. *If there be a meſſenger with him*, &c.

Secondly, We have here the motive, or firſt moving cauſe of this mercy, that is, the grace or free favour of God, *then he will be gracious unto him*; and ſaith, *Deliver him from going downe to the pit*, that is, being gracious he will give forth this word for his deliverance. *Then he is gracious to him*, &c. (v. 24.)

Thirdly, We have here the meritorious Cauſe of this merciſull deliverance; and that is a ranſom; *I have found a ranſom*, at the latter end of the 24th verſe.

Fourthly, We have the ſpeciall benefits of this deliverance, which are two-fold.

Firſt, Reſpecting his body; *He is delivered from the pit of death* (v. 24.) And not only ſo, but he hath a life as new as when he began to live; *His fleſh ſhall be freſher then a childes; the dayes of youth ſhall returne to him againe*, (v. 25.)

Secondly, We have the benefit reſpecting his ſoule, (v. 26.) *He ſhall pray, and God ſhall be favourable to him, and he ſhall ſee his face with joy; for he will render to man his righteouſneſs.*

Thus you have the parts and purpoſe of theſe words; I ſhall now proceed to the particulars.

If there be a meſſenger with him.

Theſe words are Hypotheticall, or by way of ſuppoſition; *if there be*: noting, that it is not alwayes ſo, every one hath not this mercy to have a meſſenger ſent him; it's a ſpeciall priviledge granted by God to ſome; *If there be*

Hypothetica locutio ſignificat libertatem dei in conferendo hoc beneficio. Indicatio contingit quibus deus vult.

A meſſenger.

What or who is this meſſenger? The word in the Hebrew hath a three-fold ſignification; all which are inſiſted upon by interpreters upon this place.

Coc. לאך *inde* מלאך *miſſus legatus nuncius.*

Firſt, It ſignifieth *an Angel*; Now, Angels properly taken are ſpirituall or incorporeall ſubſtances, whoſe both office and high dignity it is to attend about the throne of God, and to be ſent forth upon his ſpeciall ſervice (*Pſal:* 103. 20.) *Bleſs the Lord ye his Angels that excell in ſtrength, that doe his commandements, and*

and hearken to the voyce of his word. God *hath thouſand thouſands of theſe ſervants miniſtring to him, and ten thouſand times ten thouſand ſtanding before him* (Dan: 7. 10.)

Some ſtay upon this expoſition, affirming that here we are to underſtand an Angel by nature; And hereupon ground the miniſtring of Angels to thoſe who are either ſick in body, or troubled in mind. Yea the Popiſh writers would hence prove the interceſſion of Angels for man, and mans invocation of Angels; but though the expoſition be granted, yet it yeilds no ground for this Inference. For what though God ſhould ſend an Angel to inſtruct and comfort a ſick man, will it therefore follow that the ſick man ſhould pray to him, and ſo give him the honour which is due to God?

Secondly, The word is applyed in particular to *Jeſus Chriſt the uncreated Angel, or the creating Angel, the Lord of Angels*, who, by way of eminency is called, *The Angel of his preſence*, (*Iſa:* 63. 9.) *and the* (*Angel or*) *meſſenger of the Covenant*, (*Mal:* 3. 1.) He alſo was that Angel of whom the Lord ſpake to the children of *Iſrael* (Exod: 23. 20.) ſaying, *Behold I ſend an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voyce, provoke him not, for he will not pardon your tranſgreſſions* (if you perſiſt in them) *for my name is in him*, that is, he is of the ſame nature with my ſelfe, and with that nature he hath my name, *Jehovah*. Thus ſome carry it here, as if *Elihu* ſpecially intended the miniſtration of Jeſus Chriſt, the Angel of the Covenant, to the ſick ſinner, for his reſtoring both as to the health of ſoule and body. 'Tis true, Jeſus Chriſt is the great Angel, or meſſenger, and he primarily and chiefly doth all the buſineſs for poore ſinners; he is the meſſenger ſent from God, and he is the interpreter of the mind of God, he came from the boſom of the father, and reveales the myſteries of heaven to us by his holy Spirit. He indeed is *the one of a thouſand*, the chiefeſt of ten thouſand, to ſhew unto man his uprightneſs. Yet, I conceive, that in this place, not the Lord of Angels alone, but ſome Angel of the Lord is alſo intended. And therefore,

Vides quam clarè hoc loco Elihu de Chriſto concionetur; per quem omnis conſcientia, quantumcunq; per legem occiſa vivificatur per quem omnis crux vitæ et liberationis inſtrium eſt. Brent:

Thirdly, The word *Angel* is applyable to every Meſſenger; The Scripture gives it firſt to thoſe that are ſent by men about any errand or buſineſs (1 *Sam:* 23. 27.) *But there came a meſſenger unto*

unto Saul, saying, haste thee and come; for the Philistims have invaded the land. We read of an evill messenger (*Pro:* 13. 17.) who is either such a one as brings an evill message, or is himselfe evill (*Isa:* 14. 32.) *What shall one then answer to the messengers of the Nation, the Lord hath founded Zion, and the poore of his people shall trust in it.* And as it notes a messenger first by man, so a messenger sent by God. The ancient Prophets were in this sence the Angells of God, his messengers, and so are the Ministers of the Gospel at this day. The Epistles to the seaven Churches, are all directed to *the Angells of the Churches*, that is, to the severall Pastors or Ministers of the Churches respectively. And thus we may conclude, that by the messenger in this text, we are to understand any faithfull Minister of Christ, sent to convince, convert, or comfort a sick troubled soule. And, as was intimated before, we may very well gather up both these latter interpretations into one, that which applyeth it to Christ, and that which applyeth it to the Ministers of Christ. For so we have here both the author and the instrument of this comfort to the sick man. *Jesus Christ is the chiefe messenger and comforter of poore sinners*; and the Ministers of the Gospel are instruments in his hand, sent out by him for the perfecting of that worke. The word is applyed to both, (*Mal:* 3. 1.) *Behold, I will send my messenger* (or, *my Angel*) *and he shall prepare the way before me. John* the Baptist was Christs messenger, as Christ himselfe (an infallible interpreter) assureth us (*Math:* 11. 10.) And presently it follows, *The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his Temple, even the messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in; Behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.* In the first part of the verse, *John* is called the *Lords messenger*, and in the latter part *Christ* is called *the Lords messenger*. Both were messengers, yet with a mighty difference; and therefore *John* the messenger of Christ, saith of Christ the messenger, (*Math:* 3. 11.) *He that cometh after me is mightier then I, whose shoes I am not worthy to beare.* And againe (*John* 1. 26.) *He it is that coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoes latchet I am not worthy to unloose. If there be a messenger.*

Nuncius est propheta aliquis seu doctor à deo missus. Piscator.

Hence note.

First, *The Ministers of Christ are the messengers of Christ.*

Christ is the fathers messenger, and they are messengers sent out

out by Christ. *As my father hath sent me, so send I you*, said Christ to his *Apostles* (John 20. 21.) And though that Title of *Apostle*, which signifieth *One sent*, or a *Messenger*, be most properly attributed to those, who were immediately called and inspired by Christ, yet in an allayed sence it may be applyed, commodiously enough, to any true Minister of the Gospel, for he also is sent; he hath both his mission and commission mediately from Christ. Yea the word *Apostle* is applyed in common to all or any that are sent upon business (*John* 13. 16.) *He that is sent* (let him be who he will or upon what occasion soever he is sent) *is not greater then he that sends him.*

Apostolum hic non specialis muneris, sed generale nomen est, missum cum mandatis significans. Grot:

So then, the Ministers of the Gospel are called the *messengers* of Christ; First, Because they are sent by Christ, and have a Commission from him. Secondly, They are his *messengers* because they are instructed by Christ, and carry forth his mind: they may not speake their owne words, nor their owne sence, but the word which they bring, is or ought to be, what they have received, or what Christ hath put into their mouthes, that's their duty. And the messengers of Christ are to speak his mind.

First, Plainly (1 *Cor:* 2.4.) *In the demonstration of the Spirit.*

Secondly, boldly, not flattering the persons, nor fearing the faces of men. Thirdly, They should speak *authoritatively*, though they beseech, and beg, and pray, yet they are to doe all as having a warrant for what they doe, and as being cloathed with power from on high. *If any man speak* (saith the Apostle, 1 *Pet.* 4. 11.) *let him speak as the Oracles of God.* As he is to speak *the Oracles of God*, so as the oracles of God. Some speak, who doe not speak the oracles of God, but their owne opinions. Others speak the oracles of God materially, that is, they deliver divine truths, yet they doe not speak them *as the oracles of God*, with that authority which becomes the Gospel; we say of some, *They marr their tale in the telling*; Though they report, or tell the mind of him that sent them, yet they spoyle it in reporting it; The Ministers of the Gospel spoyle their message, unlesse they report it plainly, boldly, and with Authority.

Thirdly, If Ministers be the messengers of Christ, surely then, they are to be heard, and their message is to be received; if God sends a messenger to us, shall we not open the doore to him? if a friend send a messenger to us, he takes it very ill (and well he

he may) if we doe not. 'Tis below civility, 'tis an high affront to a man not to receive his meſſage, what is it then to the moſt high God! How dreadfull is that woe which Chriſt pronounceth againſt ſuch as refuſe either his meſſengers, or their meſſage, (*Math:* 10. 14, 15.) *Whoſoever ſhall not receive you, nor heare your words; When ye depart out of that houſe or City, ſhake off the duſt of your feete*; Implying, that God would ſo ſhake them off, or eſteeme them no more then the vileſt duſt. Yea (as another Goſpel hath it (*Mark* 6. 11.) implying, that as they had not received the teſtimony which his meſſengers bare of him, ſo their duſt ſhould be kept *as a teſtimony againſt them*. And leſt the miſchiefe threatned them in this ænigmatical or covert ſpeech ſhould not be underſtood, Chriſt himſelfe expounds it in the next words, *Verily, I ſay unto you, it ſhall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of Judgement, then for that City.*

Further, 'Tis not enough barely to receive Chriſts Meſſengers, they muſt be received as the Meſſengers of Chriſt. Such a reception the Apoſtle found among the *Galatians*, (*Chap.* 4. 14.) *And my temptation (or daily affliction) which was in my fleſh, ye deſpiſed not, nor rejected, but received me as an Angell of God, even as Chriſt Jeſus.* And what is ſaid of the Meſſenger, is to be underſtood alſo of his meſſage, both are to be received as from Chriſt. How is that, you will ſay? Take it in theſe four words, Firſt, when 'tis received *gladly*, (*Acts* 2. 4.) It ſhould be the joy of our hearts (the Pſalmiſt calls it the *joyfull ſound*, Pſ. 89. 15.) to hear a word from Chriſt. Secondly, when it is received *reverently*, and reſpectfully, as giving honour to the meſſage and the Meſſenger for Chriſts ſake. Thirdly, when 'tis received obedientially, as ſubmitting to the word; elſe your reſpectfull, and joyfull receiving the meſſage of Chriſt is but a complement, or piece of Courtſhip. Fourthly, when their *whole meſſage* is thus received, as *Cornelius* ſaid to *Peter* (*Acts* 10. 33.) *We are all here preſent before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.* We muſt receive not only thoſe things that ſute us well, but thoſe things that are moſt croſſe to our corrupt natures and intereſts, whether of worldly profit or pleaſure; this is to receive the Meſſengers and meſſages of Jeſus Chriſt, as his. *If there be a Meſſenger,*

An

An Interpreter.

That's a ſecond ſtile, or Title given to the man ſent to the ſick ſinner; The Hebrew word here rendred an *Interpreter*, cometh from a root ſignifying ſweetneſſe, or to ſweeten. Some conceive the Latine word (*Mel*) for honey hath its originall from it, becauſe the meſſage, or interpretation that comes from God ſhould be ſweet, as honey to us; *David* profeſſeth, *The word of God is ſweeter then honey, and the hony-comb*, (Pſal. 19. 10.) As if he had ſaid, 'tis ſweeter to the ſoul then that which is ſweeteſt to ſenſe. Now, the *meſſenger* ſent from God, is called an *interpreter*, becauſe he is ſent to interpret and declare the mind of God to his people. Mr. *Broughton* renders, *A Teacher*. The word *interpreter* may be taken three wayes.

מלץ *dulcuit inde* מליץ *oratorem vel interpretem ſignificat, quia dicentis ſerm. nes dulces auditoribus ſunt.* Novar:

Firſt, For any one that interpreteth tongues or languages. Thus 'tis ſaid (*Gen.* 42. 23.) *Joſeph ſpake to his brethren by an interpreter*, they ('tis like) did not underſtand the Egyptian language, and he either for ſtate, or to conceale himſelf the better, would not ſeem to underſtand theirs.

Secondly, There is an interpreter of miſteries as well as of languages. Many things ſpoken in our own language may need an interpreter more then the words of a ſtrange language. We read (*Prov.* 1. 6.) *of a Parable, and the interpretation of it.* Parables are wiſe, but hard and dark ſayings, they need an interpreter. The Goſpel is a myſtery, and he that can expound and declare the myſteries of the Goſpel is an *interpreter* indeed.

מלץ *certè eſt advocatus quem Chaldæi vocant* פרקליטא *paracletam, ſignificat eadem vox oratorem Rhetorem.* Druſ:

Thirdly, The word *interpreter* is taken in a larger ſence, for any perſon that interpoſeth between two, or that indeavours the ſetling of any matter in difference, either between God and man, or between man and man; (*Iſa.* 43. 27.) *Thy Teachers* (we put in the Margin *interpreters*) *have tranſgreſſed againſt me.* As if he had ſaid, they who as Mediators ſhould have prayed for thee to me, and have declared my will to thee, are themſelves depraved.

Further, We may diſtinguiſh of a threefold interpreter. Firſt, a grammaticall interpreter, whoſe buſineſs is to give the ſence of words. Secondly, a logicall interpreter, who gathers up the meaning, ſcope and mind of any ſentence, or the purpoſe of man in what he ſpeaketh. Thirdly, there is the divine or ſpirituall interpreter,

preter, who labours to bring the truths of God, and the heart of man together. The Apoſtle having treated about prophecying, concludes (1 *Cor.* 14. 25.) *And thus are the ſecrets of his heart made manifeſt, and ſo falling down on his face he will worſhip God, and report that God is in you of a truth*; as if the man that beleeved not, or one unlearned (for of ſuch he ſpeaks, *verſ.* 24.) had ſaid, ſurely *theſe men underſtand what is in my heart, for they have brought the truth of God, and my heart together, ſo that I muſt confeſſe God is in them*, that is, *there is a divine wiſdome or interpretation in them.* When *Elihu* ſaith, *If there be an interpreter*, we are to underſtand him in this laſt ſence; not of one that can interpret words, like a Grammarian, or give the ſcope and ſence of words like a Logician, but of one that hath a divine skill to bring the truths of God home to the heart of man, that is, to convince & informe an ignorant conſcience, and to comfort, relieve and ſupport a troubled conſcience. *If there be an interpreter,*

Hence note.

The Miniſters of Chriſt are the interpreters of the mind and good will of God toward poor ſinners.

They interpret the mind of God as to peace and reconciliation, as to grace and ſalvation, as well as to duty and holineſs of converſation. 'Tis the niceſt and hardeſt thing in the world to interpret the mind of God aright to a ſinner, to bring his heart to a cloſing with the great truths, and promiſes of the Goſpel; he that can doe this skilfully is worthy the name of an interpreter. The Apoſtle ſaith of him who is but a babe in Chriſt and uſeth milke (that is, lives upon the lower and more eaſie principles of faith) *he is unskillfull in the word of righteouſneſſe* (Heb. 5. 13.) that is, he knowes not how to make out and mannage for his own comfort the doctrine of free grace through the alone righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt. And therefore, as firſt, God himſelf is the author and fountaine of this grace; as ſecondly, Jeſus Chriſt is the purchaſer or procurer of the fruits of this grace to ſinners; as thirdly, the effectuall worker of our hearts to receive this grace, as alſo the witneſs-bearer and ſealer of it to our ſouls is the holy Spirit; as fourthly, the word of the Goſpell is the Charter, and Covenant of this grace: ſo fifthly, the Miniſters of Chriſt are the interpreters of this grace; and they are, or ought to be skillfull in this word of righte-

righteouſneſs. Their skill and duty is firſt to explaine what the Covenant is, and rightly to lay down how the ſinners reconciliation to God is wrought. Secondly, to make a ſutable and ſeaſonable application of it, or to bring it home to the ſouls and conſciences of poor ſinners, as they find their ſtate to be. And as the Miniſters of Chriſt are Gods interpreters to his people, ſo they are the peoples interpreters unto God. They are the former, two wayes; Firſt, by opening the mind of God to his people; Secondly, by urging and preſſing them to receive it both for their direction and conſolation. They are the latter four wayes: Firſt, by laying open and ſpreading the peoples wants, and weakneſſes before God. Secondly, by confeſſing their ſins, and tranſgreſſions to God. Thirdly, by intreating the Lord for them, or by praying for mercy, pardon, and forgiveneſs in their behalfe, for ſins committed. Fourthly, by giving thanks in their name for mercies received. Thus they are firſt, Gods mouth to the people in preaching & declaring the Goſpel; Secondly, the peoples mouth to God in prayer and thanksgiving. And in both performe the worke and Office of an interpreter.

And if the Miniſters of the Goſpell are interpreters; Then,

Firſt, Every Miniſter muſt be acquainted with the mind of God. He muſt have skill in the myſtery of the Goſpel. How ſhall he be able to interpret the mind of God to ſinners, who is not acquainted with the mind of God? *We have the mind of Chriſt* (ſaith the Apoſtle of himſelfe and his fellow-labourers in the Goſpel (1 *Cor.* 2. 16.) and when he ſaith, we have the mind of Chriſt, his meaning is not only this, that they had the mind of Chriſt written in a book, but they had a cleare underſtanding of it, and ſo were fitted to interpret it to others.

Secondly, As he muſt have the knowledge of the myſtery, ſo he muſt have the tongue of the learned (*Iſa.* 50. 4.) *That he may be able to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to him that is weary*; that is, to the wounded, and troubled in conſcience; This is the interpreter intended by *Elihu.* He is one that hath learned, and is taught of God. Humane learning, the knowledge of Arts, and Sciences, is good, and hath its uſe; but divine learning, or learning in divine things, that is to be divinely learned, ('tis poſſible for one to have learning in divine things, and not to be divinely learned) is abſolutely neceſſary to make him an interpreter. It is not

enough to know divine things, but he must know them divinely, or by the unction and teachings of the Spirit. The Apostle *John* (Revs. 10.8.) *is commanded to eat the book*; this eating of the book, signifieth the spirituall knowledg of divine truths; in this sence, we know no more then we eat, then we (as it were) turn into our own substance, that which is eaten becomes one with us; the mystery of the Gospell must be eaten by the interpreter of Gospell mysteries. A man cannot interpret the mind of God till he knows it; and he cannot know the mind of God, unlesse God himself reveals it; so the Apostle argueth (1 *Cor.* 2. from 12, to 16.) *As no man knoweth the mind of a man, but the spirit of a man that is in him, so the things of the spirit of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God, and he to whom the Spirit of God doth reveale them.* And therefore though a man may have an abillity to interpret the word of God, as 'tis an excellent book, a book full of admirable knowledge, he may (I say) have an abillity to interpret it soundly by humane learning, yet no man can doe it savingly and convertingly, but by the help of the Spirit. (*Psal.* 25. 14.) *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his Covenant*; he will shew it effectually, he will make them know it. Thus *David* prayed (*Psal.* 119. 18.) *Lord open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wonderous things out of thy Law.* Naturall parts and humane learning, arts and languages may give us an understanding of the tenour and literal meaning of the Law of God; but none of these can open our eyes to behold the wonders of the Law, much lesse the wonders and mysteries of the Gospell. The opening of our eyes to behold these spirituall wonders is the Lords work, and it should be marvelous in our eyes. For this opening of the eye (and nothing without this) will make any man the most ignorant man among a thousand, *An Interpreter*.

One among a thousand.

These words containe either a third higher Title, or the highest commendation of the former two. A *messenger*, an *interpreter*, even such a one as is *one among a thousand*; *One* is no number, and a *thousand* is put for the greatest number; then *one among a thousand*, or *one of a thousand*, implyeth that the one here spoken of is a very rare one; only he that is seldome seen, or found, is *one among a thousand*; *Solomon* saith (*Eccl.* 7. 24.) *One man among a thousand have I found, but a woman among all those have I not found.* There were very few wise or good men among many when he found but one among a thousand. He might find men in great number, but the number of those that deserved to be called *men* was very small, so small, that he saith he found but *one* among a thousand. So that here when *Elihu* calls the *interpreter One among a thousand*, he teacheth us that such a messenger, such an interpreter is rarely to be had, or being had is a very rare and excellent one. 'Tis a proverbiall speech, with an hyperbole, to say of any man, he is *one among a thousand*; for though we are not to take it arithmetically or strictly, yet *one* being no number, must needs signifie very few, or the smallest number, and a *thousand* being the greatest whole number must needs signifie many, very many or a great number. And therefore to say of this *interpreter, he is one among a thousand*, must needs import, that even among a thousand men, we can hardly find one who hath a faculty or a competency for this office, or is fit to be honoured and adorned with this Title, *An interpreter*.

Hi nuncii rarè sunt ita ut ex mille hominibus, vix unus reperiatur, qui munere illo rectè fungi possit. Pisc.

Hence note.

True and faithfull interpreters of the mind of God are very rare.

He is a rare and choyce man that is pickt out of a thousand men. The faithfull messengers and interpreters of the mind of Christ, are rare under a twofold notion; First, as being precious and of great worth and use: Such are the light of the world, and the salt of the earth; The minds of all men would be darke, and their manners corrupt, if God did not send out these interpreters to inlighten and to season them. Secondly, they are rare as not being every where to be had or met with; what is hardly had is highly prized. It is said (1 *Sam.* 3. 1.) *The word of God was precious in those dayes*, why so? the reason is added, *there was no open vision*, there were not such frequent manifestations of the mind of God, as had been formerly; there were few Prophets few Interpreters to be found in those dayes. The true and faithfull messengers or interpreters of the mind of God, are rare at all times, in what numbers soever they appear, though they come like an Army by thousands, though (as is said, *Psal.* 68. 11.) *God giving the word great be the company* (we put in the Margin *Army*) *of*

those that publish it, or (as the old translation hath it) *great be the Company of the Preachers*. They are rare, also, because not to be had at some times and in many places. Look over the times or ages of the world, and you will find some of them were dark times, dayes of ignorance, there were few interpreters; look at any time or at this time over many parts and places of the world, and you shall find such interpreters are not to be found in the greatest part, in the most places of it. Not one to be had in some whole countries and huge tracts of the earth. Goe to all the Heathen and Mahometan nations, and you shall not find one of these messengers, or interpreters; goe to *Greece*, which anciently engrossed all knowledge, and was famous for all sorts of learning, yet an interpreter is scarcely to be found there in these dayes. Goe to the popish nations, though they bear the name of Christ, and abound with learned men, men learned in the knowledg not only of common Arts and Sciences, but in divinity and the Scriptures; yet in the sence here spoken of they have not many interpreters, the most being such as pervert and wrest the Scriptures, and lead the people into errour, rather the messengers of Antichrist, then of Christ; Satans emissaries, then Gods interpreters. So then, if we consider, that several parts and countries of the world are quite without, they have none, and others are filled with false teachers & interpreters of the word of God, which are worse then none, we must conclude an interpreter *is one of a thousand*.

Again, If we turne our eyes to those parts of the world, where there are many sound, orthodox, faithfull messengers and interpreters of the word of God (with which blessing this nation (above many, if I say not above all) hath been crowned for a hundred years together; *England* as *Jerusalem* of old (*Isa.* 21. 1.) may well be called *a valley of vision, a seminary of seers*, because of that abundance and variety of visions and divine revelations which God hath stored us with in these latter ages) yet (I say) even here as in all other the best reformed Protestant Churches and christian nations, an *interpreter* may be called *one of a thousand*; and that in a twofold reference.

First, If we consider, the whole body of any reformed nation, Ministers are but few compared to all the people, they are hardly so much as one of a thousand, throughout that whole nation; there are but few who give themselves up to the work of the Ministry.

nistry. Few that dedicate themselves to Christs service in publishing the Gospel, for the saving of souls; there is (I say) but one of a thousand that is dedicated to that work.

For First, Most are unwilling to meddle with that calling, because of the laboriousnes of it; interpreters are they who labour in the word and doctrine, and not only so, but they must give a strict account to Christ of their labours. Some good men have declined the ministery, being terrified both with the weight of the work, and the strictnes of the account, and doubtless (were we duely sensible) it might make the ablest Ministers tremble every hour of the day, to think what a burden of care and account lyeth upon them, who are set to watch over souls.

Secondly, Others will not enter into this calling, because as the labour is great, and the account strict, so the reward, as from man, is small; it doth not lead to riches, and greatnes in the World, comparatively with other callings; though there be a comfortable competence allowed to the Ministers of the Gospel, yet there is not much of the world to be expected by them, yea they are charged not to look for much, or not to doe their worke *for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind* (1 *Pet.* 5. 2.)

Thirdly, As the reward is small, so the opposition is great, Ministers are often persecuted, and reproacht, and the more faithfull and dilligent they are, the more they are opposed and reproached. To preach the Gospel fully as it should be preacht, is to provoke thousands, and bring the World about our eares. No marvell then if the messengers and interpreters of it be not many, if they be but as one among a thousand. Thus you see what hinders the generallity of men from medling with that work. 'Tis but one among a thousand that will engage in a work upon these hard termes, or that præ-apprehending them, hath faith and self-denyal enough to swallow and overcome them.

Againe, Consider those that outwardly bear the name and Title of the Ministers of Christ, and you will find that among them, they who are true and faithfull to their trust, are upon the matter, but one among a thousand. As there are but few Ministers among many men, so there are but few Ministers among many that are true and right interpreters. Doe but take out or sever these five sorts from among them who pretend to be Ministers, and then it will soone appear that the interpreters in truth are but few among many of those that are so in Title.

First,

First, Take away all those, who thrust themselves boldly, or are admitted carelesly, or by mistake into the Ministery, who yet are ignorant, blind, ungifted, and so unable for the worke.

Secondly, Take away those, who though they have gifts and abilities, yet are lazie, and loathfull, such as will not take paines nor worke in the worke.

Thirdly, Take away these, who have gifts, and are industrious, yet are unsound (at least in many poynts) and erronious in their judgements, and so mis-lead and mis-guide those, whose guides and leaders they are.

Fourthly, Take away those, who though they are not unsound, and erronious, yet are prophane, and scandalous, pulling downe that truth with one hand which they have set up with another, or building againe those sins by their practise, which they have destroyed by preaching, and so make themselves (as the Apostle speakes in a like case, *Gal:* 2. 18.) *transgressours*; for as God justly calls such *transgressours*, because they have sinned against his word, so they make themselves transgressours, because they sin against their owne; even against the doctrine by which they have condemned those sins, which themselves live in.

Fifthly, Take away those, who though they are neither of these, neither ignorant, nor idle, nor unsound, nor scandalous, yet are but meere formall preachers, such as only speake words, deliver the out-side, and skin of the Gospel, but have no acquaintance with the marrow and power of it. Take away these five sorts from among Ministers, and surely this expression of *Elihu* will be but too much verified, *The interpreter is but one among a thousand.* Abstract all that are ignorant, idle, unsound, scandalous, formall dispencers of the word, from those who are commonly called Ministers, and then, they who remaine will be very few, so few, that every one of them, may be reckoned, *one among a thousand.* And we shall be forced to say, that *Elihu* hath not sayd without cause, whether we respect their excellency or their scarsity, that any faithfull messenger or interpreter *is one among a thousand.*

This is not spoken by *Elihu* here, nor ought it to be taken up by any of the most faithfull Ministers of Christ, to draw honour and respect upon themselves, or that their persons may be had in admiration who are faithfull; this were a pittifull designe of holding out such a truth; but it serves for this end, that the people of God may see, they have a blessing where any are faithfull; and may learne how they ought to prize those faithfull messengers, whom the Lord sends among them, yea how readily they should receive the grace of God which is tendred in their ministry. These are not only each of them, *one messenger*, or *interpreter, but each one of them is one of a thousand.* A soule-convincing, converting, quickning, comforting Minister of the Gospel is worth thousands, and *one among a thousand.* The Prophet saith (*Isa:* 52. 7.) *How beautifull are the feet of them that bring glad tideings*, &c. By their feet he meaneth their *coming*, feete being the instruments of their coming to bring this glad tideings; yet when he saith, *their feete are beautifull*, it may have a greater emphasis, for (the feete being the lowest part of the structure of mans body) it may intend thus much, that even that which is lowest and meanest in a messenger of the Gospel, his feete wearied and wet, yea foule and dirty with travel, have a beauty upon them, how much more his face and countenance; for if the very feete of such news-bringers, of such messengers, and interpreters, should be acceptable and lovely (so beauty is) to all men, how much more should their persons and most of all their message and tideings be? And doubtlesse, if men did but understand it, they would acknowledge, that God hath committed such a treasury to them, as is better and more beautifull, then all the gold and precious things of this world, and would cry out, O what a mercy is it to have such a News-bringer? and what Greedy News-mongers would they be? The *one among a thousand* would be more desirable then many thousands of Gold and Silver.

Elihu having described the person, whom the Lord often makes instrumentall for the restoring and comforting of the sick sinner, calling him *A messenger, an interpreter, one of a thousand* (which latter may be applicable to both the former) proceeds to shew the business of this messenger, or interpreter, who is one of a thousand, more expressely, or to set out what his worke is, surely excellent, and glorious worke, even this

To shew unto man his uprightnes.

We are not to understand this shewing for a bare report of the thing; in which sense the Prophet complain'd; *Lord who hath believed*

lieved our report! (Isa: 53. 1.) that is, we have shewed good things to the world, but who hath believed us? The *shewing* spoken of by *Elihu*, is not a bare declaration of the matter to the eare, but an effectuall, and powerfull impression of it upon the heart. Such a shewing as is spoken of at the 16th verse of this Chapter, *then he openeth the eares of men*; The Lord speakes so by his messengers, and interpreters, that he not only makes the eare heare, but the heart too. The heart heares when we have a sense, and are under the power of what is heard. As before we had a spirituall interpreter, so here we have a spirituall shewing of his interpretation. Here's a heavenly messenger, and a heavenly message to *the earthly man*; *To tell the earthly his righteousnes*, saith Mr *Broughton*.

Now, because of the pronoune, [*his*] *his uprightnes*; It may be demanded whose uprightnes he meanes? or, what this uprightnes is, which the interpreter sheweth.

First, Some expound it of Gods uprightnes, and then the sense runs thus; God sendeth an Interpreter to *shew unto man his uprightnes*, that is, his own right and just dealing with man; As if *Elihu* had sayd, Gods messenger shall convince this troubled man that God doth not wrong him, how much soever he doth afflict him, or that God is upright and faithful in his dealing with him. This *David* acknowledged (*Psal:* 119. 75.) *In faithfullnes thou hast afflicted me*; that's a good sense of the words, and very sutable to the purpose of *Elihu*, who was about to convince *Job* that his complainings were very sinfull and uncomely, seeing God neither had nor would, nor, indeed, could doe him any wrong. God is faithfull, just, and right, yea, God is good and mercifull to man, when he corrects him sore. Mr *Broughton* gives this interpretation of his own translation; *To tell the earthly his righteousnes*, that is, *God his mercy*. The uprightnes of God is that by which he doth righteous things. This uprightnes of God consists not only in his holines, in his love of that which is good, and in his hatred of evill, but also in his preservation of man according to his word of promise. 'Tis the righteousnes of God, that through the death and intercession of his Son, he should save and heale the believing and repenting sick sinner.

Equitatem illius. *i. e. dei, qua omnia et nominatim ipsos laborantes regit et gubernat.* Jun:

Secondly, And more clearely (as I conceive) to the present scope of this place; the Antecedent to *His*, is the sick man; And then,

then, *to shew unto man his uprightnes*, is to shew him his *owne* uprightnes.

But you will say; Is the messenger or interpreter, only to tell man how good he is, and what good he hath done? and so to flatter him into a good opinion of himselfe, or of his owne good deeds?

I answer; This *shewing unto man his uprightnes*, may be taken First, As implying the mans ignorance of that uprightnes which he hath; or that he hath an uprightnes, but doth not know nor understand that he hath it. 'Tis so sometimes with the sound godly man, as well as with the sicke, when (though in bodyly health, yet) he is discomposed and troubled in mind; For then though he hath an uprightnes of heart, an integrity towards God, or (as *Job* speakes of himselfe) *the root of the matter in him*; that is, though he be truely converted and really godly, yet he seeth it not, such temptations of Satan and troubles of mind assault him, such clouds of doubt, and darknes are upon him, that he is not able to make out his owne state. In this case the faithfull messenger or interpreter coming to him, and inquiring how it is with him, picks out this from him, that there is an uprightnes, and an integrity of heart in him towards God, and that his state is good, though he cannot discerne it. For as the life and state of grace, is alwayes a secret to those who have it not; so 'tis often a secret to those that have it. Some men, never, few men alwayes understand their own condition, and 'tis very hard to make them understand it. For as it is with many hypocrites, and with all presumptuous ones, you cannot beat them out of a good opinion of themselves; though they are stark naught, rotten at heart, and have nothing to salve themselves up with, but a little boldnes and confidence, yet they will not be perswaded off from their false foundations, and deceitfull bottoms; they will be good in their owne eyes, upright in their owne opinion, and doe not doubt but all's well with them, and will be well with them alwayes. Now, I say, as it is with some hypocrites, and all presumptuous ones, they thinke themselves to have an uprightnes which they have not; so many are upright and sincere, who see it not, and 'tis a very hard worke, the hardest worke that the Ministers of the Gospel have to make them understand and see their owne *uprightnes*.

Quid ipsum facere pro officio oporteat. Bez: *Quid hominem agere, æquum sit, scitu agnitis peccatis dei gratiam propter merita salvatoris imploret.* Scult.

Secondly, The word *uprightnes*, and the *shewing unto man his uprightnes* here spoken of, takes in the whole duty, yea and the whole priviledge and intereſt of a Godly man, or that which will be his *uprightnes* and ſet him right both before God and his owne conſcience. To ſhew unto man this his uprightneſs, is to ſhew him when he is right, and how he may be ſetled in a right ſtate; in ſuch a ſtate as will be to him like Mount *Sion* which cannot be removed. Thus the uprightneſs of man comprehends the whole buſineſs both of faith and repentance, or all that which a ſinner is called both to doe, and believe, for the repayring and mending of his loſt and ruin'd ſtate, for the putting and ſettleing him in ſuch a ſtate as the Lord may owne him as his, and be gracious to him. This, whatſoever it is, is mans uprightneſs or righteouſneſs, and the ſhewing unto man, this his uprightneſs is the bringing him word in the name of Chriſt, that God juſtifieth him from the guilt of all his ſins, and accepteth him into his favour.

Hence obſerve.

The great duty of the Miniſters of the Goſpel, is to cleare up to man, whether he be upright, or how he may ſtand upright with God.

This obſervation takes in both parts of the expoſition. To ſhew unto man how it is with him, what his preſent ſtate, and condition is, and to ſhew unto man what he ought to be, or how he may be in a ſafe condition, this is the worke of that meſſenger and interpreter who is one among a thouſand, this is a bleſſed worke, and thus it muſt be done.

Firſt, Man is to be ſhewed *the uprightneſs* of his ſtate, or that which muſt be and be had to make up the uprightneſs of his ſtate, which is

Firſt, His *firſt-repentance*, or converſion to God. Fallen man can never come into a right ſtate, till he returne to God from whom he fell. A mans ſinfull ſtate is a crooked, perverſe, and wretched ſtate; repentance or returning to God, is the bringing of a man right againe, it brings him to his uprightneſs, even to that ſtate, wherein he was firſt made; *Loe this have I found* (ſaith *Solomon*, Eccl: 7. 29.) *that God hath made man upright; but they have ſought out many inventions. Solomon* doth not diſcover the ſeverall branches and ſtreames of mans ſinfullneſs, but the roote and ſpring of it he doth, the corruption of his nature by the fall.

fall. For as he found that God made man upright, ſo mutable, ſubject to temptation, and as eaſily yeilding to the temptation, as admitting himſelfe to be tempted: and ſo, not reſting in that way and meanes of happineſs (as the Devil his tempter did not) which the wiſdome and goodneſs of God had chalked out and allotted to him, but conceiting to himſelfe a higher perfection, he then began and ſtill continueth to ſeeke out variety of meanes (called by *Solomon*, *many inventions*) as then to get more then he had, ſo now to regaine ſome ſhadow at leaſt of what he had. Theſe inventions, are all thoſe carnall ſhifts, whereby man hopes either to palliate his ſin, or to pacifie his conſcience. But all prove vaine inventions; there being no poſſibility now, for man to get out of ſin, or to goe back to God, and ſo to his firſt eſtate, but by repentance; That's Gods invention, and he hath concluded, that nothing without that ſhall bring man (the caſe of infants is another thing) to that ſtate of uprightneſs, in which he was firſt made. And therefore the Apoſtle giving an account of his miniſtry, how he acted as a meſſenger, or an intepreter (He indeed was one among a thouſand) ſaith (*Acts* 20.20,21.) *I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, &c. teſtifying both to the Jews, & alſo to the Greekes, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, which is

The ſecond thing wherein this uprightneſs of mans ſtate doth conſiſt. Theſe two, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, were the ſumme of all thoſe Sermons in which *Paul* gave counſel both to Jewes and Gentiles what to doe that they might be ſaved. And this is the worke of all Goſpel *Miniſters in ſhewing unto man his uprightneſs*. He that is converted, and believeth, he that turneth from ſin, and taketh hold of Jeſus Chriſt by faith for righteouſneſs, is in a better ſtate of uprightneſs, then when he was firſt made upright. The Prophet (*Hab:* 2. 4.) ſpeaking of faith, and that which is oppoſite to it ſelfe-confidence, uſeth this word, *Behold his ſoule which is lifted up* (namely in thoughts of any ſelfe or creature-ſufficiency) *is not upright in him*. A proud ſoule is not an upright ſoule. What is pride? ſurely this, for a man to thinke himſelfe in a good condition, or that he is well enough, that he wants nothing, as it is ſayd of the Church of *Laodicea* (Rev: 3. 17.) when yet he is empty and guilty, poore and peny-leſſe in ſpiritualls, wanting

every thing, eſpecially a ſight and ſence of his poverty and wants; yet this is every mans thought of himſelfe, till he is ſhewed what is *indeed his uprightneſs*. The naturall mans ſpirit is lifted up, not to God nor in God by faith and repentance, but in himſelfe. *The ſoule thus lifted up is not upright* (ſaith the Prophet, and what ſaith he next?) *But the juſt ſhall live by his faith.* As if he had ſayd; *The man that lives by faith, or the man that believes, and ſo lives upon Chriſt, is upright and hath an uprightneſs which will hold him right*, which the uprightneſs of creation did not. Then the whole matter of mans uprightneſs was in himſelfe, and he was to ſtand upon his own bottom, having no promiſe of ſupport. But now the maine matter of mans uprightneſs is out of himſelfe, and beſides, himſelfe hath a promiſe to be ſupported in his uprightneſs. Man by the grace of repentance, turning from ſin, and by the grace of faith cloſing with the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is ſet right in the Court of heaven, and ſhall be preſerved (in his uprightneſs) by the power of God through faith unto ſalvation.

Againe, When man is ſhewed his uprightneſs as to his ſtate, which is his life of juſtification; then he muſt alſo be ſhewed his uprightneſs as to his way or courſe of life in *ſanctification, or holineſs of converſation.* The interpreter muſt not only bring man to Chriſt, but muſt tell him how he ought to walke in Chriſt. Man being ſet right, ought to goe right, or (as 'tis ſayd, *Pſal:* 50.23.) *To order his converſation aright.* Mans uprightneſs in walking and working is an inſeparable fruit of his uprightneſs in Being.

Thirdly, The buſineſs of the interpreter, is not only to bring the troubled ſoul to a true ſence of ſin, to a cleare ſight of Chriſt, and a ſutable converſation, but to furniſh him with weapons to reſiſt Satans temptations, to ſhew him how to mannage *the ſword of the Spirit, and the ſhield of faith, that he may be able to quench all the fiery darts of the Devill*; as alſo to anſwer, reſolve, and remove the doubts and ſcruples, that may ariſe in or are upon his owne conſcience, and ſo to ſettle him in a ſweet and comfortable dependance upon Chriſt by faith as his uprightneſs and righteouſneſs, againſt all the feares which at any time aſſault his peace.

But ſome may ſay, Should not ſinners be ſhewed their un-uprightneſs or unrighteouſneſs, rather then their uprightneſs?

I anſwer; Firſt, 'Tis a peice of our ſhewing man his uprightneſs, to ſhew him that he hath no uprightneſs. The Spirit convinceth, firſt, of ſin, and then of righteouſneſs (*John* 16. 8.) Secondly, I anſwer, a mans uprightneſs (according to the meaning of this Scripture) cannot be ſhewed him, but he muſt alſo be ſhewed his unrighteouſneſs. Thirdly, I anſwer, The ſick man here ſpoken of, may be ſuppoſed a man troubled in mind about his ſins; and in that caſe the interpreters duty is to eaſe his mind by ſhewing him his uprightneſs in the way opened, rather then to burden his mind further by ſhewing him his ſin or unrighteouſneſs. And therefore laſtly,

To cloſe this poynt with a word of caution; When *Elihu* ſpeakes of an uprightneſs to be ſhewed the troubled ſoule; 'Tis not, that the meſſenger who comes to relieve and comfort him, ſhould uſe flattering words, and blow him up with a conceit of his owne good workes, and ſo tell him a ſtory of his vertues or vertuous deeds. No, the uprightneſs chiefly intended here is the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, in and by which we are reconciled to and made one with God. Nor can we ever attaine to this till we are made ſencible of our owne nothingneſs, till we are unhinged of ſelfe, and quite taken off from any bottoming upon our owne righteouſneſs. Some, when they have trouble of conſcience upon them, what doe they? they fly to their owne righteouſneſſe; And when they are ſick, and ready to dye, how doe they prepare to ſtand right before God? they confeſs they have ſinned, and done amiſſe, but they hope they have repented, and made amends for that; yea they can remember they have done ſuch, and ſuch, poſſibly, many good things, they have been juſt to all men, and charitable to the poore, they have heard the word, and been at many a good Sermon, they have prayed and faſted, *&c.* Thus they patch up the buſineſs, as if this were their *only uprightneſs*, whereas, indeed, their only uprightneſs is the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt. We never ſee where our uprightneſs is, till we ſee there is nothing that makes us ſtand upright in the court of heaven, but only Chriſt our righteouſneſs. This is the great duty of the meſſengers, and interpreters of Chriſt, to declare to man this righteouſneſs for his uprightneſs. And that hence it is (as *Elihu* proceeds in the next verſe to aſſure the ſick man) that God is and will be gracious to him.

Verſ. 24.

Verſ. 24. *Then he is gracious unto him, and ſaith, Deliver him from going downe into the pit, I have found a ranſome.*

Theſe words hold out the generall iſſue and fruit of the labours and good counſell of that meſſenger or Interpreter dealing with the ſick man, and ſhewing him his uprightneſs.

There are three diſtinct interpretations which run quite through this verſe, and they ariſe from a different apprehenſion about the antecedent in this pronoune [*He*] *then he is gracious unto him.* He; who is that? All the Popiſh interpreters refer it to the *Guardian-Angel* ſent to attend on this ſick man; *Then he (the Angel) will be gracious, and he will ſay, deliver him.* But as I then layd by that opinion that the meſſenger was an Angel properly taken, ſo I ſhall not ſtay upon that which is a conſequent of it, here.

Secondly, Severall of our Proteſtant interpreters referre this *he*, to the Meſſenger or Interpreter, to the Prophet or any ſpiritually wiſe and holy man, ſent of God to aſſiſt and help the ſick man in his diſtreſſe. Some are ſo poſitive in this opinion, that they deny the text any other reference; *This is to be underſtood of the Meſſenger* (ſaith one) *and not of God. And I grant 'tis ſutable to the buſineſs of the meſſenger who comes to comfort and inſtruct the ſick man, that he ſhould pitty and compaſſionate him in that diſconſolate condition, and likewiſe pray for him, according to the tenour of theſe words in the text, or to the ſame effect; O Lord God, be gracious to him, and deliver him, let him not goe downe to the pit, for the ranſome ſake which I have found.* As if *Elihu* had ſayd; *When that faithfull meſſenger ſhall have declared the benefits and grace of God to the afflicted man, then pittying his afflicted ſoule, he ſhall pray for him; O God deliver him from death and condemnation, from the pit, and from deſtruction, for I have found and ſhewed him a ranſome, by which his ſoule may be delivered, and his ſins pardoned.*

Hoc de nuncio dicitur non de deo; aptè enim tribuitur nuncio et interpreti voluntatis dei ut miſereatur hominis in ſummo vitæ diſcrimine conſtituti. Merl:

Et de gratia eum alloquutus dixerit redime eum nec deſcedat in foveam expiatione (quam) inveni. Jun:

Summa orationis quæ apud deum pro afflictis, habenda eſt. Jun:

In the 19th Chapter of this Booke at the 27th verſe, *Job* uſeth this word in his application to his friends, for their pitty to him, and more favourable dealing with him; *Have pitty upon me, have pitty upon me, O my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me.* As if he had ſayd, *The hand of God preſſeth me ſore, O let not your hand*

hand be heavie upon me too. This expoſition carrieth a great truth in it, and is not at all inconſiſtent with the letter of the text; yet I ſhall not inſiſt upon it, but adhere rather to a third, which makes the antecedent to this [*He*] to be God himſelfe.

Then he is gracious.

That is, when the meſſenger hath dealt with the ſick man, when he hath opened his condition to him, and ſhewed him his uprightneſs, or how he may ſtand upright before God, or what his righteouſneſſe is before God, and hath brought his heart to an unfeigned ſorrow for his ſin, and to the actings of faith upon the promiſe; then God is gracious, and then he gives out the word for his reſtoring, and orders it to be preſently diſpatcht away to him, ſaying, *deliver him, unlooſe him, unbind him, let him not goe downe into the pit, I have found a ranſome.* Taking this for the generall ſence of the Text, I ſhall proceed to open the particulars.

Then he will be gracious, or then, *he will have mercy upon him*, as Mr *Broughton* tranſlates. Then and not before; till then the Lord lets his bones ake, and his heart tremble, till then he ſuffers him to be brought ſo low that he is reckoned among the dead, but then, though not before, he ſheweth himſelf gracious unto him. When a poor man is reduced to the utmoſt extreamity, then is Gods opportunity, then is the ſeaſon of mercy; and the Lord therefore lets us be at the loweſt, that we may be the more ſencible of his goodneſs in raiſing and lifting us up: The Lord ſuffers many (as *Paul* ſpake of himſelf, *2 Cor. 1. 9.*) *to have the ſentence of death in themſelves, that they may learn not to truſt in themſelves, but in him who raiſeth the dead.* We ſeldome give God either the glory of his power by truſting him, or of his goodneſſe by thanking him for our deliverances, till we are brought to the *laſt caſt* (as we ſay) or to ſuch an exigent as leaves no viſible meanes in probabillity, no nor of poſſibility to eſcape. And when 'tis thus with us, *then he is gracious.*

Secondly, *Then he is gracious*, that is, when the man is doubly humbled, when the mans heart is graciouſly broken, when the man is growne into an abhorrence of himſelf and of his ſin, or loathes himſelf for his ſin, as much as he loathed his meat, as 'tis ſaid in the former verſe; when his heart is thus taken quite off from all that is below in the world, and gathered up beleevingly

to

to Jesus Christ in the word of promise; *Then he is gracious.*

חנן *Misertus, gratificatus, gratia prosecutus fuit, ex gratia donavit beneficit.*

The Originall word hath many comfortable significations in it, yet all resolvable into this one, *he is gracious.* It signifies to pity, to have compassion, tenderly to regard, to bestow grace, to doe good, there is enough in the bowells of this word to bear up the spirit of the sickest body, or of the most troubled soul. It is said (*Gen.* 6. 8.) *Noah found grace* (or favour) *in the eyes of the Lord. Noah* was the only man that held out the grace of God in that age, him only did God *find perfect or upright* in his Generation (*Gen.* 6. 9.) and *Noah* only was the man, that found grace or favour in the eyes of the Lord in that generation (*Gen.* 6. 8.) God was gracious to him and his, when the whole world perished by water. That proper name *John* is derived from this word; when God gave *Zachary* and *Elizabeth* a Son in their old age, he also directed how he would have him called, *ye shall call his name John*, which name (as we may well conceive) was assigned him either because God did very graciously and favourably bestow that gift upon his Parents in their old age, and so shewed them much favour (*a child at any time is a great favour from God, especially in old age*) or, secondly, because *John* was to open the Kingdome of Grace, to preach the Gospel, and to prepare the way for Christ, by whom grace and truth came. The Baptist was as it were the *loop and button* between the legall and the Gospel dispensation; therefore his name might well be called *John.* And there is frequent use in Scripture of the *Adverb* which comes from this *Verb*, to signifie injuries received without desert or undeservedly. (*Ps.* 7. 4.) *Yea, I have delivered him that without cause was mine enemy*, or that was mine enemy *gratis.* And again (*Psal.* 35. 7.) *For without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause have they digged for my soul.* Yet more, as the word signifies the doing of good (*gratis*) or when there is no desert; so any injury done *gratis*, or when no provocation hath been given the party so to doe. Now, as all the mischief which the wicked plot against or doe to the people of God is undeserved, and floweth meerly from their malice, so all the good which God doth for his people is undeserved, and floweth purely from the fountaine of his free grace, or from his compassions, which faile not. And surely the Lord deserveth highest praises from man for any good he doth him, seeing what he doth is *gratis*, or undeserved. Further,

Further, This Hebrew word (*Chinnam* answers the Greek word (δωρεὰν) rendred *freely* (*Rom.* 3. 24.) *We are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.* How can unjust men deserve justification? Therefore Mr *Beza* translates, *We are justified gratis*, that is, *by his grace.*

δωρεὰν τῇ αὐτοῦ χάριτι. Gratis i. e. ejus gratia. Bez:

Againe, When it is said, then *he* (or, *the Lord*) *is gracious*, it may be taken two wayes. First, as, to be gracious implyeth the intrinsecall graciousnes of his nature, or that mercifullnes and kindnes which dwells in the heart of God, and which indeed is God, (for the graciousnesse of God is the gracious God) thus God is alwayes and altogether gracious, he is infinitely and unceasantly gracious. Secondly, when it is said, *he is gracious*, it may note only the graciousnes of his acts, and dispensations; thus, as I may say, the Lord is gracious (*ad hinc et nunc*) as he sees cause, at this time he is gracious and not at that time; that is, he puts forth acts of grace now, and not then. The Lord puts forth acts of grace, both according to the pleasure of his own will, without respect to any thing in man, as also without respecting what man is or doth, according to his pleasure. And thus we are chiefly to understand it here; *then he is gracious.* God is gracious in his nature alwayes, and alwayes alike gracious; but he is not alwayes alike gracious in his dispensations, or in giving forth acts of grace; he is gracious to man according to his secret will as he pleaseth, but he is gracious according to his revealed will as man pleaseth him.

Hence Observe, first.

The first cause and spring of all our mercies is the graciousnesse of God. Or, *All our mercyes flow out from the grace of God.*

That's the fountaine, yea that's the Ocean which feeds and fills all the Channels of mercy, which stream to us, as our happines in this world, and for our everlasting happines in the world which is to come. All is of grace fundamentally, or because the Lord is and will be for ever gracious. Thus the Lord spake to *Moses* (*Exod.* 33. 19.) *I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious.* My mercy shall flow out, when, and to whom, and where I please. And the proclamation which he made of himselfe in all his royall Titles runs in the same straine (*Exod.* 34. 6.) *The Lord, the Lord God, mercifull, and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in*

goodnesse and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity. If we consider God, first in doing us good; Secondly, in forgiving us the evill which we doe; Thirdly, in delivering us from the evills which we now suffer; Fourthly, in delivering us from the feare of future sufferings; all is from grace and from free grace. He doth us good though we are undeserving any good, that's grace, yea, he doth us good though we are ill deserving, and that's more grace. He doth all for us through grace, First, in spirituall, and Secondly, in temporalls; not only doe the good things of eternall life, but the good things of this present life flow from grace unto his own people. Not only the health of their soules, but the health of their bodyes, not only deliverance from hell, but deliverance from sickness also, flow from his free grace in Jesus Christ. Therefore of all their mercies and salvations (both as to the foundation and top-stone of them) the people of God must cry (as the Prophet *Zachery* (*Chap.* 4. 7.) foretells the people of God should say of that longed for deliverance, when *that great mountaine should become a plain before Zerubbabell*) *grace, grace, unto them*: That is, grace hath begun them, and grace alone will maintaine, continue, and perfect what it hath begun. As there is nothing in us (except our misery) which moves the Lord to begin, so there is nothing in us (but our inability) which moves the Lord to perfect what he hath begun. He seeth we cannot, and therefore he will perfect what he hath begun, and all this he doth that he may exalt his own name, and perfect the praise of his free grace towards us.

More distinctly, that all comes from grace, or from the graciousnes of God, may note these five things to us. First, not only that God doth all for his people freely, or without desert. But Secondly, that he doth all things willingly, or without constraint for his people. Thirdly, that he doth all things forwardly for his people. He doth very much unaskt and unsought, and he is not much askt or hardly drawne to doe any thing for his people. Though he hath said of some things, *I will be sought unto, or inquired after that I may doe them for you*, (*Ezek.* 36. 37.) yet his mercies are never forced nor wrested from him by intreaties, but flow from a principle of love, naturally, as water out of a fountain. Fourthly, he doth all rejoycingly, *even with his whole heart, and with his whole soul. Mercy pleaseth him*, and he is pleased with occa-

occasions of shewing mercy, 'tis no burden to him to doe us good; mercy proceeds from his nature, and therefore he delighteth in mercy (*Mic.* 7. 18.) yea, to be mercifull is his nature, and therefore he cannot but delight in it. Fifthly, graciousnes being the very nature of God, implyeth that he will do us good liberally, and constantly, or that (as the Apostle *James* speaks) he giveth liberally, and upbraideth not; he doth not upbraid us with our poverty, who receive, nor doth he upbraid us with the riches of the gifts which himself bestoweth; And because they flow from his nature, therefore he doth not in the least empty himself, how much soever he fills the creature with his gifts or goodnes. Some men (upon the matter) even exhaust and undoe themselves by liberallity unto others; and they who give most, or have most to give, cannot alwayes give. It is said in this Book, (*Chap.* 37. 11.) *By watering, he wearieth the thick cloud*; that is, God commandeth the cloud to give raine so long, that it hath not a drop more to give, but is quite spent. Springs or fountaines are never wearied or spent with watering, because their waters come as freely and as fast as they goe; God is an everlasting spring of grace and goodnes; He is not wearyed, nor emptyed by what he giveth out to, or doth for the creature, because all floweth from his naturall graciousnesse as from a fountaine.

Then he is gracious. I would urge the second reference of that word (*then*) a little further; It was shewed before, that it might refer, First, to the extreamity of the sick man, Secondly, to the sick mans humiliation, or the right disposure of his spirit to receive renewed acts of grace, and favour from the Lord.

Hence observe, Secondly.

God usually dispenseth or giveth out acts of grace when we repent and turne from sin, when we believe and lay hold upon the promise; Then he is gracious.

Si ægrotus ille monitis illius nuncij parueris ac proinde resipuerit, tum &c. Pisc:

It is said (*Isa:* 30. 18.) *Therefore will the Lord wait that he may be gracious.* The Lord hath alwayes a gracious disposition, a gracious nature; he alwayes hath a store and a stocke, a rich stocke and store of mercy by him; but he doth not alwayes give it forth; no, *he waits to be gracious*, that is, he waits till we are in

a fit frame, till we are in a due temper to receive his grace. And becauſe as to the diſpenſings of grace, God waits to be gracious; therefore many retard and hinder their owne good; they are not yet in a frame to receive; their veſſell is not yet ſeaſoned to hold mercy. The Lord waited to be gracious to *David* after his grievous fall, and therefore he did not give *Nathan* a Commiſſion to ſay, *Thy ſin is done away*, till *Davids* heart was broken, and had ſaid (2 *Sam:* 12. 13.) *I have ſinned againſt the Lord*; But when once that word fell from him, then *Nathan* declared how gracious the Lord was to him. As ſoone as *David* ſaid, *I have ſinned* (that's an act of repentance) preſently, *Nathan* ſaid, *the Lord hath done away thy ſin*, that's an act of grace. When did *Ephraim* heare a word of comfort from God? The Prophet tells us (*Jer:* 31. 18, 19, 20.) *I have heard Ephraim bemoaning himſelfe*, (that is, mourning over and bewayling his ſin) *ſaying, thou haſt chaſtiſed me, and I was chaſtiſed, as a bullock unaccuſtomed to the yoake.* We have him there alſo praying, *Turne me, O Lord, and I ſhall be turned*, &c. Upon this, how graciouſly, how meltingly did the Lord ſpeak? *Is Ephraim my deare ſon? is he a pleaſant child? ſince I ſpake againſt him, I doe earneſtly remember him ſtill*, (or, *in remembring I remember him*) *my bowells are troubled for him, I will ſurely have mercy on him.* Now I will manifeſt my grace, and acquaint him with my goodneſs. The Lord was very gracious to *Saul* afterwards *Paul*, he ſent *Ananias* to him with a meſſage of mercy, as to reſtore the ſight of his bodyly eyes, ſo to aſſure him that he ſhould be an inſtrument in the hand of Chriſt to open the eyes of many, *and a choſen veſſel to beare his name before the Gentiles and Kings and the Children of Iſrael*, (Acts 9. 15.) But when was this meſſage delivered him? the text tells us (*v.* 11.) *For behold he prayeth*; the man is in the duſt, he is brought upon his knees, his ſpirit is broken; that word *he prayeth*, comprehends the whole worke of a gracious ſoule, as to his humiliation and returning to the Lord. In the parable of the prodigall Son, his father is repreſented abundantly gracious to him; but he did not ſignifie it, he did not ſend the ring, nor the rich robe to him, when he was abroad in a ſtrange Country among harlots, drinking and waſting his eſtate, time and ſtrength vainely; we read of no acts of grace to him then, but when, being pinched with famine and hunger, he came to

to himſelfe, and began to bethink himſelfe of coming back to his fathers houſe, and that he had brought himſelfe by his own folly to beggery, and want, and huſks; when he was upon theſe termes, or reſolves to goe home to his father, and caſt himſelfe at his feet as unworthy the name or priviledge of a Son, then his father ran to meete him, fell on his neck and kiſſed him, then he put on the ring, and cloathed him with the robe, then he killed the fatted calfe, and made a feaſt for him. All which ſceane of mercy doth but hold out this one word in the text; *Then he is gracious.*

There are two ſorts of gracious acts of God. Firſt, ſome are acts of abſolute grace, or of preventing grace; Theſe are put forth upon and exerciſed towards the creature, before there is any the leſt preparation in the heart, to draw them out or invite the beſtowing of them. Thus, the grace of God in election is abſolutely free, there was no previſion of any qualification in man moving God to elect him. And ſo that wonderfull act of grace (in which election firſt deſcends and diſcovers it ſelfe) effectuall vocation, is abſolutely free. God calls a ſinner when he is in the heat and hurry of his evill wayes, purſuing his luſts in the height of his pride, and in the hardneſs of his impenitent heart. Now, if when God firſt calleth a ſinner there is nothing in him but ſin; What can move God to call him but free grace? A third abſolute act of grace is juſtification; God doth not juſtifie a ſinner for any thing that he finds or ſees in us; As to us 'tis altogether free. *He juſtifieth the ungodly* (Rom: 4. 5.) when that wretched infant was in its blood (which expreſſeth a miſerable uncleane poluted condition) *then was a time of love* (Ezek: 16. 8.) then was God gracious. What lovelineſs was there in that infant (repreſenting the beſt of men in that fallen naturall eſtate) to draw out the love of God? nothing at all, yea ſhe was altogether unlovely, yet then (ſaith God) *thy time was the time of love*, or then was the time of putting forth love in her converſion and vocation; *Then, I ſayd unto thee when thou waſt in thy blood, live.* And becauſe the thing might ſeeme not only ſtrange, but even impoſſible, that the heart of God ſhould be towards ſuch a wretched one for good, the word is doubled, *yea I ſayd unto thee, when thou waſt in thy blood, live.* Theſe acts of abſolute free grace are the glory of the Covenant of grace; for if the Covenant ſhould hold out acts of Grace only upon our pre-diſpoſitions, when ſhould we receive any act of grace? The

The promise is not of this tenour, *I will pardon them when their hearts are soft and tender*; but, *I will take away the heart of stone, and give them a heart of flesh.*

Yet Secondly (as to the poynt in hand) there are conditionall acts of grace, I may call them second acts of grace, or renewed acts of grace. For when after conversion we fall into sin, and by that evill heart of unbeliefe (remaining in a great measure unmortified) we depart from the living God (*Heb:* 3. 12.) God doth not give out fresh acts of grace, but upon repentance, and the renewings of our communion with him. Having once received grace, we being again helped and assisted by grace, act graciously, before God declares himselfe gracious to us. When a man is cast upon a sick bed for sin, (that's the case of many) the Lord will see repentance before he will raise him up againe. (*James* 5. 15.) *The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and if he hath committed sins, they shall be forgiven him*; that is, if he being cast upon a sick bed to correct or chasten him for the sin that he hath committed, shall humble himselfe, and seek the Lord by prayer, praying and calling for prayer; Then the sin committed shall be forgiven him, and the Lord will raise him up againe. 'Tis not the prayer of another that can obtaine deliverance for the sick, much lesse the forgiveness of his sins, if himselfe be prayer-lesse, and repentance-lesse. But while others pray for the sick mans bodyly health, they praying also for his soules health, the Lord gives him repentance for his sin, and then a comfortable sight of pardon. So then before the Lord puts out these second acts of grace, he looks for and finds something in the creature yet still, that also is an effect of his grace both to them and in them. They, who have already received grace, must stir up their grace, and renew acts of grace (thorough grace) towards him, before he dispenses acts of grace towards them. And as consolation in this life, so that highest and last act of grace, salvation, in the life to come, is not bestow'd upon any, till they are fitted. God calls and converts the worst of men, those that are in their filth, and mud, and mire, but he will not save a filthy person, he will have him first purged and prepared. *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not enter into the kingdome of God* (1 Cor: 6. 9.) and that *without holiness no man shall see the Lord* (Heb: 12. 14.) There is no eternall salvation without preparation; nor is there any promise of temporall salvation without it. When a man is sick to death (as in the text, salvation comes not, the Lord is not gracious till the sick mans spirit is humbled and set right; till the messenger hath shewed him, how he may stand upright before the Lord, and he hath imbraced his message; then, and not till then *he is gracious.* And as in these words we have the occasion of this grace; so in the following words we have the publication of this grace; *Then he is gracious.*

And saith, Deliver him from going downe into the pit.

[*And saith*] that is, the Lord gives out an order presently, he gives out a warrant for the release of the sick man. When earthly Princes have once granted pardon to an offender, they say, *deliver him*; they signe a warrant for his deliverance out of prison, or they signe a pardon, and say, deliver him from death, when he is at the place of execution. Thus concerning this sick man, God saith, *deliver him from going downe to the pit.*

The word rendred *deliver*, signifies also *to redeem*, 'tis used in this forme no where else in all the Scripture. To free, deliver or redeeme a man, intimates his person in hold, *then will he say, deliver him.* From what? there are as many sorts of deliverances, as there are of troubles, each particular strait, and trouble, hath a proportionable deliverance. There is deliverance, First, from captivity or bondage. Secondly, from want or poverty. Thirdly, from imminent sudden danger or perill by land or Sea. Fourthly, from sicknesses and diseases. Fifthly, from death; and that twofold; First, from temporall, Secondly, from eternall death. Here when he saith, *deliver him*, we may determine this deliverance by the latter words of the text, to be a deliverance from deadly sickness; *deliver him from going downe to the pit*; that is, deliver him from death; To goe downe to the pit, is often in Scripture put to signifie dying.

פדה *idē quod* פרה *redemit liberavit verbum* פדה *non alias reperitur, et pro ratione loci intelligitur et exponitur pro* פרה Merc:

Further, The pit implyes *corruption*, because in the pit or grave, the body corrupts. It is sayd indeed (*Numb:* 16. 30.) of that rebellious triumvirate, *Corah, Dathan, and Abiram, they went downe alive into the pit*, but they went downe to death, and ordinarily the dead only goe downe to the pit. The same phrase is used (*Psal:* 28. 1. *Psal:* 88. 4. *Ezek:* 31. 14. *Ezek:* 32. 18, 24, 29, 30.) That text is very remarkeable (*Prov:* 28. 17.)

He

He that offereth violence to the blood of another, he ſhall flee to the pit, let no man ſtay him; That is, The murderer, who in wrath and hatred, or upon private revenge deſtroyeth the life of any man, ſhall haſten to deſtruction, either as chaſed and hurried by his owne feares like *Cain* and *Judas*; or as proſecuted by the juſtice of the Magiſtrate. And as he thus haſteth to the pit, ſo *let no man ſtay him*, that is, Firſt, let no man conceale him; Secondly, let no man move for his impunity, or ſollicite his pardon; or if any doe, then Thirdly, let not the Magiſtrate grant his pardon; For the old univerſall Law tells him his duty (*Gen: 9. 6.*) *He that ſheddeth mans blood, by man* (that is, by the Magiſtrate commanding, and by his officers executing) *ſhall his blood be ſhed.* And as another Law hath it (*Deut: 19. 13.*) *Thine eye ſhall not ſpare him*, &c. The Magiſtrate who is in Gods ſtead, may not ſay of him, as here God doth of the ſick man, *Deliver him from going downe to the pit. His blood is ill ſpared who would not ſpare the blood of another.*

But it may be queſtioned, for as much as the text ſaith only in general, *deliver him*, Into whoſe hands this warrant for his deliverance is delivered? or who is directed to deliver him? Maſter *Broughton* repreſents God ſpeaking this to the ſick mans diſeaſe, for thus he renders the text; *Then he will have mercy upon him, and ſay, Spare him* (*O killing malady*) *from deſcending into the pit.* God will ſpeak thus to the diſeaſe (and there is a great elegancy in it) *ſpare him O killing malady.* Diſeaſes come and goe at Gods command; they hurt and they ſpare at his direction; As the Lords breath or word bloweth away the winds (*Math. 8. 27.*) *The men marvelled, ſaying, Who is this that even the winde and the ſeas obey him?* So the Lords breath bloweth away ſickneſs; if he doe but ſpeak to a diſeaſe, to a feaver, to an ague, to a dropſie, to a conſumption, *O killing malady, ſpare him*, thou haſt done enough (any diſeaſe might prevaile to death, did not God ſay, *ſpare him*) hold thy hand, not a blow more, not a fit more *O killing malady.* Death it ſelfe, much more ſickneſs, heareth the voyce of God. And it may be ſaid to heare him, becauſe it doth that, which they who have the power of hearing ought to doe; that is, it obeyeth or yeildeth to the voyce and command of God, & will no longer afflict the ſick man. Diſeaſes may be ſaid to deliver a man from death, & the pit, when they depart from him. Yet,

Secondly,

Secondly, I conceive this warrant for the deliverance of the ſick man, is given out to the *meſſenger or interpreter, to the one among a thouſand*, that viſiteth him in his ſickneſs. He having been with him, and dealt with his conſcience, he having brought him into a good frame, the Lord is gracious, and in anſwer to his prayer, ſets it upon his heart that he ſhall recover, and warrants him to tell him ſo, which is, declaratively, to *deliver him from going downe to the pit.* This act of mans delivering the ſicke, is like that act of man pardoning the ſinner (*John 20. 23.*) that is, 'tis miniſteriall or declarative, not originall nor Authoritative. The interpreter doth not deliver him, but tells him God will. We have the Pſalmiſt ſpeaking thus after his ſupplication and prayer made to the Lord for a ſick State or Nation or for a ſick Church (that's his ſcope, *Pſal: 85.*) *Wilt thou not revive us againe, that thy people may rejoyce in thee* (v. 6.) Surely thou wilt, and he expreſſeth his confidence, that God would (*v. 8.*) *I will heare what God the Lord will ſpeake, for he will ſpeak peace unto his people, and to his Saints.* When he had prayed he would harken for news, or for a meſſage from heaven, whether or no, the Lord would order him to ſpeak peace to thoſe for whom he had been praying, and ſay, *deliver them from going downe to the pit.* Thus did the Prophet *Habakkuk*, *I will ſtand upon my watch, and ſet me upon my tower, and ſee what he will ſay unto me, and what I ſhall anſwer when I am reproved* (Chap: 2. 1.) In the next verſe, *The Lord anſwered and ſayd, write the viſion and make it plaine upon tables, that he may run that readeth it.* And what was the anſwer? ſurely deliverance; for having ſayd, *in the end it ſhall ſpeake and not lye* (v. 3.) he concludes (*v. 4.*) *The juſt ſhall live by his faith.* Believing deliverance, he ſhall at laſt be delivered from the pit of captivity and live.

Sequeſtrem illum Jubebit ei renunciare impetratum eſſe ſibi liberationem. Bez:

Here in the text we muſt ſuppoſe this meſſenger had prayed, and having prayed, he did not neglect his prayer, but was hearkning what the Lord would ſay. *Elihu* was confident the Lord would give a gracious anſwer, though not by an immediate voyce or revelation to his eare, yet by an aſſurance of the mercy given into his ſpirit. When that good king *Hezekiah, was not only ſick unto death*, but had received an expreſſe meſſage from the Lord, *Set thy houſe in order, for thou ſhalt dye and not live* (2 Kings 20. 1.) 'Tis ſayd at the 2d verſe, *He turned his face to the wall, and*

prayed unto the Lord, ſaying, &c. And at the 4th verſe, *The word of the Lord came to Iſaiah the Prophet, ſaying, turne againe, and tell Hezekiah the Captain of my people; Thus ſaith the Lord, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have ſeene thy teares, behold, I will heale thee*, &c. Here God gave a word formally, and put it into the Prophets mouth, *Goe deliver him from going downe to the pit*. And though the Lord doth not thus now in ſuch an explicite and open way, nor may we expect it, yet there is a virtuall ſaying of this word from the Lord, and that ſometimes mightily impreſt upon the hearts of thoſe who have prayed and ſought unto him, for the ſick man, whereby (not by an ungrounded vaine confidence, but by a ſcripturall holy confidence, comparing the promiſe with the mans condition) they are enabled to tell him, *The Lord hath delivered thee from going downe to the pit*. And he ſhall as certainly be delivered, as if the Lord had ſent an expreſſe from heaven to tell him ſo. *Then he is gracious to him, and ſaith, deliver him from going downe to the pit*.

Hence obſerve.

Firſt, *Death is a going to the pit, a going to deſtruction.*

Thus it is ordinarily with all who dye, to the pit they goe. Many dye and goe downe to the bottomleſs pit; all who dye may be ſayd to goe to the pit. To goe to the bottomleſs pit, is the circumlocution of eternall death, as to goe to the pit is the circumlocution of temporall death.

Secondly, Foraſmuch as the man being ſick the Lord gives out this word, *deliver him from going downe to the pit*.

Note.

Sickneſs hath in it a tendency unto death.

The ſick ſtand as it were upon the borders of the grave. Some not only put death farr from them in health, but in their ſickneſs; untill they are even dead, they ſcarce thinke themſelves dying. It is good for us in our health and beſt ſtrength to be looking into the pit, and conſidering upon what grounds of comfort we can deſcend into the grave. How much more ſhould we be thinking of and looking into the pit, when we are in a languiſhing and dying condition?

Thirdly, Obſerve.

The word and work of deliverance is from God alone; Then he will be gracious and ſay, deliver him from going downe to the pit.

God can, and God only can deliver from death; no creature in heaven or earth can ſpeak this but by commiſſion from God; none can open this ſecret till God interpret it. Deliverance is the Lords ſalvation; and the word of ſalvation from ſickneſs, as well as of ſalvation from hell, comes out from the Lord.

But is it not ſayd (*Pro:* 11.4.) *Righteouſneſs delivereth from death.*

I anſwer; when it is ſayd, *Righteouſneſs delivereth from death*, The meaning is, God delivereth the righteous from death. He delivereth them from the ſting and terror, from all that which is properly called the evill of corporall death; and he delivereth them wholly from the leaſt touch or ſhadow of eternall death. And this righteouſneſs which delivers from death is not our own, but the righteouſneſs of Chriſt made ours by the appoyntment of God, and received as ours by faith. 'Tis neither any righteouſneſs wrought in us, nor any righteouſneſs wrought by us, but that righteouſneſs which is wrought for us, which delivereth from death: and that delivereth us from death, becauſe God ſaith of ſuch a righteous perſon, deliver him, as often from temporall death, or going downe to the pit of the grave, ſo alwayes from eternall death, or going downe to the pit of hell.

Fourthly, In that this word *deliver him*, is given to the meſſenger.

Obſerve.

God conveighs deliverance and mercy to us by men like our ſelves.

He will have the creature beholding to the creature for his mercy, though mercy come freely and only from himſelfe. God delivereth the ſick and the ſinner in ſuch a method that we may owne, though not ſtay in his meſſengers, as the inſtruments of his favour. God who can doe all things by himſelfe, will not doe many things but by meanes. He ſaith to the meſſenger, *Deliver him from going downe to the pit*.

You will ſay, How can a Miniſter or a Meſſenger deliver the ſick from going downe to the pit?

I anſwer, (as was touched before) he delivers him by declaring to him the minde of God, by acquainting the ſick with the promiſes of deliverance, and by preſſing him to believe and reſt upon them; by aſſuring him that as God is able to performe the promiſe, ſo he is faithfull and willing to performe it; yea that he hath given ſome tokens for good that he will deliver him from going downe to the pit. Thus the worke of Gods free grace, mercy, and power, is oftentimes attributed to inſtruments and ſecond cauſes, becauſe they have their place and uſe in the bringing about the purpoſes of God for the good of his people. Heuce ſome men are called *Saviours*; *And Saviours ſhall come up on mount Zion* (Obad: *v.* 21.) No man can ſave either from temporall or eternall deſtruction; *He that is our God is the God of ſalvation, and unto God the Lord belong the iſſues from death* (Pſ: 68. 20.) yet ſaith the Prophet, *there ſhall come Saviours*; that is, God will rayſe up worthy men, *principall men* (as another Prophet cals them, *Mic:* 5. 5.) who ſhall deſtroy *Zions* enemies. Thus *Paul* admoniſheth *Timothy*, *Take heed to thy ſelfe, and to thy doctrine, continue in them, for in ſo doing thou ſhalt ſave thy ſelfe and them that heare thee* (1 Tim: 4. 16.) The Apoſtle *James* (Chap: 5. 20.) ſpeakes the ſame thing; *He which converteth a ſinner from the errour of his way, ſhall ſave a ſoule from death, and ſhall hide a multitude of ſins*. And the ſame Apoſtle ſaith (as to the caſe in the text) at the 15th verſe of the ſame Chapter; *The prayer of faith ſhall ſave the ſicke*. Though none can ſave, yet many are means of our ſalvation. And the Lord is pleaſed to honour thoſe who are the meanes of any ſalvation, ſo farre, as to ſay, *They ſave*. It is indeed the duty of all to aſcribe the all of every worke and piece of ſalvation and deliverance to God only. When the people ſtood wondering at *Peter* and *John* after they had healed the lame man, *Peter* anſwered (*Acts* 3. 12.) *Ye men of Iſrael, why marvel ye at this? or why looke ye ſo earneſtly on us, as if we by our own power or holineſs had made this man to walke. The God of Abraham, &c. hath glorified his Son Jeſus*; As if they had ſaid, Therefore doe ye alſo glorifie him, not us for delivering this lame man. Though God is pleaſed to put much honour upon man, by ſpeaking of what himſelfe doth, as if man had done it; yet he will not give the glory of what he doth to any man, nor may any take it. God ſaith to the meſſenger, *deliver him from going downe to the pit*;

pit; but woe to that meſſenger who ſaith (when he is delivered) I have delivered him from going downe to the pit.

Thus we ſee the ſpring of the ſick mans recovery, it is from the graciouſneſs of God, and we ſee the meanes of it, God gives a warrant to his meſſenger, ſaying, *Deliver him from going down to the pit*; But what is the procuring or meritorious cauſe of this deliverance? As the Text hath ſhewed us the firſt moving cauſe, *The grace of God*, ſo it ſhewes us the meritorious cauſe, by which his deliverance is procured; Things are ſo ordered in the Covenant of grace, that though the Lord acts with infinite freeneſs, yet he hath appointed and ordered a way in which alone he will doe, what he freely doth. This is expreſſed in the laſt clauſe of the verſe,

For I have found a ranſome.

But where did God find it? certainly in his own boſome, in his own heart; Jeſus Chriſt came out of the boſome of the Father, there he was, God found him in and with himſelf; God did not find the ranſome by chance, nor did he find it by advice and conſultation with others, but he found it in himſelf, in his own infinite wiſdome and goodneſs; that is, he contrived it, he invented it there. This rare, this moſt excellent thing, *a ranſome*, is the *Lords own invention*. *I have found it*, I know how to doe this man good, I know how to ſave him, and doe my own honour and Juſtice no hurt, no wrong: my honour is ſaved, my Juſtice is ſatisfied in doing it. *I have found a ranſome*.

The word here rendred *a ranſome* ſignifies in the Verb, *to cover or to hide* that which before lay open, that it appeare no more. Grace brings another face upon things, a new face, I may ſay, upon our ſouls. The covering of ſin elegantly denotes the pardon of ſin. And what reaſon have we to be thankfull and rejoyce, when ſin (our ſoul dure and deformity) is covered! We have very foul faces (I meane outward converſations) and more foul ſouls, or inward inclinations, till the Lord is graciouſly pleaſed to put a covering upon them. If we cover our own ſins we ſhall have no mercy, but if the Lord once cover our ſins, he cannot deny us mercy, that being it ſelf our greateſt mercy, and the fruit of his great mercy. *The Mercy-ſeat*, ſo famous in the Moſaicall Pœdogogy, is expreſt by this word, which properly ſignifieth a *Covering*.

Verbum כפר *denotet expiationem, aut redemptionem, tum, etiam pretium quod pro redemptione ſoluitur. Significat etiam co-operire linire, aut operire bitumine, quaſi priſtinam faciē rei alicujus aut immunditiem abſcondere; quod eleganter refertur ad abſtertionem peccati. Pined.*

The

The *Mercy-ſeat* was it ſelf a *Covering of pure gold, laid over the Arke*, in which Arke the Law was put (*Exod.* 25. 17. 21.) *Thou ſhalt put the Mercy-ſeat above upon the Arke, and in the Arke thou ſhalt put the teſtimony that I ſhall give thee.* And as the dimenſions of the Arke were two Cubits and a halfe in length, and a Cubit and a half in breadth, ſo the ſame were the dimenſions of the Mercy-ſeat; (*Verſ.* 10. 17.) which figured that as the Mercy-ſeat fully covered the Arke wherein the Law was, ſo Chriſt ſhould fully cover all our ſins, which are tranſgreſſions of the Law. The righteouſneſs of Chriſt is as long and as broad as the Law, and ſo, our ſins being covered with that ſhall never appeare againſt us. Therefore alſo *from above this Mercy-ſeat between the two Cherubims* (the Lord ſaid (*verſ.* 22.) *I will meete thee, and I will commune with thee.* There was a gracious manifeſtation of the preſence of God above the *Mercy-ſeat*, becauſe that typified Jeſus Chriſt the true *Propitiatory or ranſome*, covering and hiding out of the ſight of God for ever all our defections iniquities and tranſgreſſions. And hence the ſame word which ſignifies expiation or redemption, ſignifieth alſo the procuring cauſe of our Redemption, here called (as alſo in the New Teſtament) *A Ranſome.*

I have found a Ranſome. A *ranſome* is properly a price demanded for releaſe out of bondage. And when the Captive is releaſed, the price is paid. To be redeemed and to be ranſomed is the ſame thing. (*Iſa.* 35. 9, 10.) *The redeemed ſhall paſſe there, and the ranſomed of the Lord ſhall returne and come to Sion, and everlaſting joy upon their heads, they ſhall obtaine joy and gladneſs, and ſorrow and ſighing ſhall flee away.* Thus here, *Deliver him* (ſaith the Lord) *from going downe to the pit*; *I am ſatisfied, I have found a price, a ranſome.* Both Law and Goſpel meet in this; here is the Law, by which the man being humbled confeſſeth his own ſin, and the wrath of God, due to it. Here is alſo the Goſpel, by which he hath been taught to beleeve, that his ſins are pardoned, and the wrath of God turned away from him for the ranſome which Chriſt hath paid.

Græci dicunt λύτρον *quod non eſt aliud quam ſanguis Chriſti, in quem et veteres crediderunt.* Merc:

So then, 'tis not as popiſh Expoſiters tell us, *I have found a ranſome*, that is, I have found the mans good workes, I have found his repentance, I have found his tears, his prayers, his almes. I now ſee that in him for which I may be propicious to him, and deliver

deliver him from the ſickneſs under which he is detained; thus they generally make ſomewhat in man or done by man, his *ranſome*, at leaſt to have a ſhare in it. The heart (as was ſhewed before) is prepared for deliverance, by the workings of faith and repentance. But the ranſome upon which deliverance is given, is nothing at all wrought in us or by us. Woe to us notwithſtanding our prayers and repentance, our reformations and humiliations. To put theſe in place of a ranſome, or to hope for deliverance from the pit upon their account is to pervert the whole Goſpel.

Apparet in homine aliquid æquitatis, ex quo ei miſerear poſſum, quam quærebam. Aquin:

Others give a better ſence, yet not clear enough, thus, *He hath humbled himſelf, and I am as well ſatisfied as if I had received a ranſome*, but I lay that by alſo. For when God ſaith *I have found a ranſome*, we are to underſtand it of a reall ranſome, of full pay or ſatisfaction, not of a ranſome by favour and acceptation. This ſatisfaction to the juſtice of God is only and wholly made by *Jeſus Chriſt*, without any the leaſt contribution from man. The perfect ranſome which the Lord finds is the blood of his own Son, which is called the blood of the Covenant, becauſe thereby the Covenant is confirmed, and all Covenant mercies aſſured to us. Upon this price or ranſome God reſtores the ſick ſinner and pardons him, he heales both his body and his ſoul. And that *Job* had knowledge of this ranſome as the only meanes of deliverance, appeares (*Chap.* 17. 3. 19. 25.) *Deliver him, for I have found a ranſome.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt.

The redemption or deliverance of man by a ranſome is the invention of God, and the invention of God only.

If all men on earth, yea if all the Angells in Heaven had ſat from the foundation of the world to this day, in counſell beating their braines, and debating this queſtion, *How man, ſinfull man might be delivered out of the hand of the Law, or from that condemnatory ſentence under which the Law had caſt and detained him, with ſatisfaction, or without dammage to the Juſtice and righteouſneſs of God, they could never have found it out, nor any thing like it. This is Gods own invention*; or, if God had ſaid to fallen man, *I ſee thou art in a loſt pitifull condition, but ſit down and conſider how I may doe thee good, and not wrong my ſelfe, how I may relieve thee, and not diſhonour my ſelfe, I will freely doe it.* If God (I ſay) had given

given man a blank to write downe what he would have done to bring this about, he could never have found it out; but muſt have periſhed for ever in his ſin. The thought of a ranſome in this way had never entred into the heart either of men or Angells, if God himſelf had not revealed it. Therefore the Apoſtle *Peter* having ſpoken of the great diligence of the old Prophets ſearching into and inquiring about that great myſtery, the way and means of mans ſalvation, concludes (1 *Epiſt.* 1. 12.) *Which things the Angells deſire to look into.* The word there uſed notes a curious prying into that which hath ſome veyled or ſecret rarity in it. We may conceive the Apoſtle in that word alluding to the Cherubims, which by Gods command, to *Moſes*, were made with their eyes looking downe to the Mercy-ſeat or propitiatory in *the Holy of holyes* (Exod. 25. 20.) figuring the ranſome in the Text, yea and expreſſed by the ſame Hebrew word. The living Angells doe that which thoſe repreſentative Angells ſeemed to doe, they look earneſtly at the myſtery of our redemption made, or ranſome given by Jeſus Chriſt. There is ſuch an exquiſiteneſs in this invention, the deliverance of man by Chriſt, that the Angells deſire to look into it, even as men deſire to ſee rare inventions. And this exceedingly commends the wiſdome of God in our redemption, that it was a ſecret to the very glorious Angells. They did not know it, but as it was made knowne to them; nor did God (as it ſeemes) make it knowne to them firſtly or immediately, but it was revealed to them, occaſionally by the revelation of it firſt to the Church; as the Apoſtle doth more then intimate, (*Eph.* 3. 10.) *To the intent, that now unto principalities and powers in heavenly places*, (that is the holy Angells) *might be known by the Church the manifold wiſdome of God.* As if, had it not been for the light given to and ſpread abroad in the Church, the Angells had been in the dark to this day about that matter. And doubtleſs if the Angells did not gather up their knowledge of that myſtery by the miniſtery of the Apoſtles preaching it to the world, in a way of information, yet by their contemplation of what was done in the Church, & of the goodneſs of God to the Church, they ſaw as in a glaſſe that manifold wiſdome of God which before they ſaw not, or were ignorant of. Now if the holy Angells knew not this myſtery, but as it was revealed, much leſſe could man. *We* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 2. 6, 7, 8, 9.) *ſpeake wiſdome among*

παρακύπτω.

among them that are perfect: yet not the wiſdome of this world, nor of the Princes of this world, that come to naught. But we ſpeak the wiſdome of God in a myſtery, &c. which none of the Princes of this World know, (who uſe to be the moſt knowing men in the World) *for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.* As if he had ſaid, ſurely the Princes of the world would have adored, not reproached and crucified Chriſt, had they underſtood who he was, or the worke which he came about. And therefore the Apoſtle calls it not only a myſtery, but a great myſtery, and that there is not the leaſt queſtion, but 'tis a great myſtery. (1 *Tim.* 3. 16.) *Without controverſie great is the myſtery of godlineſſe, God manifeſt in the fleſh; this great myſtery, which from the beginning of the World hath been hid in God* (Eph. 3. 9.) that is in the counſell and decree of God, hath been alſo ſome way or other revealed by God almoſt as ſoon as the world began; It was revealed to *Adam* by the promiſe of the womans ſeed; and to *Abraham* by promiſe, that in his Seed all the Nations of the earth ſhould be bleſſed; It was revealed to the Church of the Jewes in Ceremonies and Propheſies, and it hath been revealed to the Church both of Jewes and Gentiles by the Spirit in the preaching of the word, ever ſince Chriſt paid this ranſome to this day; and it had been hidden to this day, if the Lord had not revealed it; 'tis therefore the *Lords invention.*

Eccleſia ex Judæis pariter ac gentibus collecta, quaſi ſpeculum eſt in quo contemplantur Angeli miriſticam dei ſapientiam, quam antea neſciebant. Cato.

Let me add this by way of inference. We honour men that bring forth any rare invention. And if it be an invention which alſo produceth profit and advantage to mankind, how are the Authors of it admired, and their names recorded? All the inventions of the moſt refined wits in the world, are dull pieces to *this invention*, the redemption of man by Chriſt. And as there is the ſtamp of an infinite unchangeable wiſdome upon it; ſo the profit which comes in by it to mankind is infinite and ineſtimable. How then ſhould we honour God, both for bringing this wonderfull invention to light, and giving us the benefit of it freely! It had been great mercy if God had delivered us upon our finding out and propoſall of a way to him; but he hath not only delivered us, but found out a way himſelf, and plotted how we might be delivered. What a glorious mercy is this! When *Darius* ſaw how *Daniel* was inſnared by his act or decree, he was extreamly troubled, and (ſaith the Text, *Dan.* 6. 14.) he *was ſore diſpleaſed with*

with himselfe, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him, and he laboured (beating his braines and studying) *till the going down of the Sun to deliver him*, yet could not, but cast he was to the hungry Lions, only he told him, (*vers.* 16.) *Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee. Darius* could not find a ransome, any meanes of deliverance for his servant and great Favourite *Daniel*. But when we had brought ourselves into a snare, and must have been cast to the Lions for ever, to be torne by them; the Lord brought forth this rare invention, a ransome, whereby we poor sinners are delivered out of the mouth *of the roaring Lion, who goeth about continually to devoure us.*

Secondly, Inasmuch as deliverance is got by ransome.

Observe.

Our deliverance is costly.

Soules are precious; they are dear ware; Blood, and that the blood of Christ is their ransome; (*Math.* 20. 28. *Rom.* 3.2.5. *Eph.* 1.7. *Col.* 1. 14. *Heb.* 9. 12. *Rev.* 5. 9.) in comparison of which all the treasures of this world are trash, our Gold and Silver corruptible, and our very righteousnes a corrupt thing. Deliverances are obtained three wayes.

First, By power or plaine force; thus *Abraham* delivered his Nephew *Lot* when he was carryed captive (*Gen.* 14. 14.) *He armed his trained servants, born in his house three hundred and eighteen*, and rescued him. I may say, the Lord Jesus hath delivered us thus, even by force and power, he hath beaten all our enemies, and having broken and *spoyled principallities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it* (his Crosse spoken of in the former verse) *or in himselfe*; that is, in his own personall power, not by any aide or forreigne assistance received from men or Angells.

Secondly, Deliverance is obtained by price or payment. When our friends or country-men are taken Captives by *Turkes* or others, we cannot send an Army to rescue them, but usually we doe it by ransome; we buy them againe out of the enemies hand, or out of bondage. Jesus Christ hath delivered us, not only by power, but by price, it was not (as hath been already shewed) by gold or silver, but by his own most precious blood, (1 *Pet.* 1. 18.) Jesus Christ hath delivered us out of the soul destroying hand of Satan.

Satan by force, but he delivers us out of the sin-revenging hand of his Father by price. Christ owed the Devill nothing (nor doe we) but blowes, but having undertaken our cause, he owed his Father as much as our debt and deliverance from it amounted to, a vast summe, yet he had enough to answer it to the utmost farthing, and did, and so delivered us.

There is a third way of deliverance, and that is by supplication and intercession, which may be considered two wayes, First, by our own prayers and supplications; Secondly, by the prayers and supplications of others; which prayers of others are properly called intercessions. The intercession of a man with man may deliver him from the wrath of a man. And the intercession of a man with God, hath wrought the temporall deliverance of some both persons, and Nations; and therefore when the Lord was resolved not to spare his people, he forbad the intercession of the Prophet (*Jer.* 14. 11.) *Pray not for this people for their good*: And he professed (*Jer.* 15. 1.) *Though Moses and Samuel* (those two mighty Advocates) *stood before me* (praying he meanes for them) *yet my mind could not be towards this people, cast them out of my sight*; In that God would not deliver his people upon their intercession, is an argument that he often doth. But 'tis the intercession of Christ alone which carryeth it with God (and that alwayes carryeth it, for the Father alwayes heareth him, that is, granteth his requests) for the deliverance of his people both from temporall spirituall and eternall evills. This intercession of Christ is the fruit of his blood shed, or of the ransome paid down for us. For as his blood purchaseth our deliverance, so by his intercession it is given in or applyed to us. We have the impetration of our pardon by Christs sufferings, and the application of it, by Christ interceding for us. So then, we are delivered both by power, and price, and prayer, in severall and distinct respects; But the present text speaks of deliverance only by a price, *I have found a ransome*, I am well paid, saith God, for mans deliverance. This ransome every poor soul may plead before the Lord, for his deliverance both from sickness death and hell. He that hath nothing to offer to the Lord (as indeed the best have nothing of their own worth the offering, and if they offer any thing of their own, of how much worth soever it may seem to be, it will not passe nor be accepted, he (I say) that hath nothing of his own to offer) yet may tell

him he shall be well paid; he may tell God, he shall have more by saving him, then by damning him. If he damne him he shall have but his own blood (the blood of a creature) for satisfaction; but if he save him, he shall have the blood of his Son, the blood of God, as a ransome for his salvation.

Thirdly, Observe.

Though the Gospel was not clearly and fully revealed in those elder times, yet it was then savingly revealed.

How doth the grace of God shine forth in mans deliverance by a ransome, in this Scripture; Here is nothing said of deliverance from sickness by medicines, but by a ransome; and if they knew that deliverance from a disease must come in by a ransome, how much more, that deliverance from damnation must come in that way? The old Patriarkes had the knowledge of Christ to come, and not only was there a knowledge of him to come in that nation and Church of the Jewes, but the light scattered abroad, the Land of *Uz* had it, *Job* had it, as hath appeared from severall passages of this Booke, *Elihu* had it as appeareth by this.

Fourthly, Observe.

Not only our eternall deliverance, but even our temporall deliverances and mercies, are purchased by the blood of Christ.

A beleever doth not eate a bit of bread, but he hath it by vertue of the purchase of Christ; Christ hath bought all good for us, and Christ hath bought us out of all evill. Christ hath not only purchast deliverance from hell, and salvation in heaven for us, but he hath purchast deliverance from a sick bed, and freedome from bondage to men for us. (*Zech.* 9. 11.) *As for thee also* (saith the Lord) *by the blood of thy Covenant* (that is, the Covenant which I have made with thee) *I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein was no water*; that is, from the Babylonish captivity. The Jewes were delivered from corporall slavery, as well as spirituall, by the blood of Jesus Christ, and so are the Covenant people of God to this day. The blood of the Covenant serves to all purposes, for the good things of this life, as well as of that which is to come. Nothing else can do us good to purpose, or deliver us from evill but the blood of Christ. (*Psal.* 49. 7, 8.) *They that trust in their wealth, & boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, none of*

of them can by any meanes redeeme his brother, nor give to God a ransome for him. In some cases, as *Solomon* saith, (*Prov.* 13. 8.) *The ransome of a mans life are his riches.* As a mans riches doe often endanger his life (all the fault of some men for which they have suffered as deep as death, hath been only this, they were rich) so a man by his riches may redeeme his forfeited or endangered life, he may buy off the wrath of man, and so ransome his life by his riches. But all the riches in the world cannot buy his life out of the hand of sickness; though a man would lay out all his substance, and spend all that he hath upon Physitians (as the poor woman in the Gospel did) yet that could not doe it. We need the blood of Jesus Christ to help us out of a sick bed, and from temporall sufferings as well as from hell and everlasting sufferings. And the more spirituall any are, the more they have recourse to the blood of Christ for all they would have, whether it be freedome from this or that evill, or enjoyment of this or that good.

Therefore, First, When we hear of a ransome let us remember that we are all naturally captives. Here is a ransome for our souls and a ransome for our bodies, we are ransomed from hell, and ransomed from death, surely then, we are (through sin) made captives to all these.

Secondly, In that the ransome is expresst by a word, that notes hiding or covering, it should mind us, that, *Jesus Christ by his blood* (which is our ransome) *hath covered all our bloody sins*; and surely the blood of our sins will appeare not only to our shame, but to our confusion, unlesse the blood of Christ cover them.

Thirdly, We may hence infer, *The Lord shall be no loser by saving the worst of sinners.* His Son hath taken care for that, he hath undertaken to see his Honour saved, and his Justice satisfied.

Fourthly, In all your outward afflictions and sicknesses; apply to the blood of Christ for healing, for helpe and deliverance.

Fifthly, Being delivered from going down to the pit, from death by sickness, *blesse Christ for his blood.* We are rescued from the arrest of death, from *Deaths Sergeant*, sickness, by the blood of Christ. And remember that as Christ ransomes us from going

downe

downe to the grave when we are sick, so Christ will ransome us from the power of the grave when we are dead. (*Hosea* 13. 14.) *I will ransome them from the power of the grave.* Which though it were primarily meant of the deliverance of the Jewes out of *Babylon*, where they seemed to be not only dead but buryed; yet the Apostle applyeth it clearly to the ransoming of the body dead indeed and laid in the grave, by the power of Christ at the generall resurrection (1 *Cor.* 15. 54.) *For then shall be brought to passe that saying that is written, Death is swallowed up of victory. O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy Victory.* Yea Christ hath ransomed all those from going down to the pit of hell, who take hold of his ransome by believing. See that you have an interest in this ransome, else you will never have deliverance from going downe to that pit. We read not all the Scripture over of any ransome to deliver those, who are once gone downe to that bottomlesse pit. They that are in the grave shall be ransomed and recovered by the power of Christ; but they that goe into hell shall never be ransomed from thence. Take hold of this ransome that ye may have full deliverance, both from sickness leading to death here, and from hell which is the second death hereafter.

JOB,

JOB. Chap. 33. Verf. 25, 26.

His flesh shall be fresher then a childes; he shall returne to the dayes of his youth.

He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him, and he shall see his face with joy; for he will render unto man his righteousnes.

IN these two verses *Elihu* proceeds, to shew the perfecting of the sick mans recovery, the foundation of which was layd in the Lords graciousnes to him, spoken of in the former verse; and the declaration of it in that word or warrant, which went out from God to the messenger about his deliverance *from going downe to the pit.*

This mercy or recovery in the full extent of it, hath a two-fold respect; First, to his body; Secondly, to his soule.

The mercy as it respects his body, is layd downe in the 25th verse; *His flesh shall be fresher then a childes; he shall returne as in the dayes of his youth.*

The mercy which respects his soule, or the state of his inward man, is layd downe in the 26th verse; *He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him, and he shall see his face with joy; for he will render unto him his righteousnes.*

In this recovery of his soule-state, we may further consider, First, the causes of it.

First, The Instrumentall cause, *prayer*; *He shall pray unto God.*

Secondly, The principall or efficient cause of it, together with the first moving cause, The kindnes of God; *He will be favourable unto him.*

Secondly, The consequence of this his renewed soule-state; *He shall see his face with joy.*

Thirdly, The matter wherein this joyfull state doth consist, in the close of the 26th verse; *For he will render to man his righteousnes.*

So much for the scope and parts of these two verses; which shew the blessed issue, which God gives this distressed and sick man from his afflictions and sorrowes. Verf. 25.

Vers. 25. *His flesh shall be fresher then a childes.*

By *flesh* he meanes the naturall flesh of the body; this flesh shall be fresh, yea *fresher*, and not only fresher then it was before he fell sick in his man-hood, but then it was in his child-hood, *fresher then a childes*. The word which we render comparatively, *fresher*, signifies to wax soft or tender. 'Tis no where read in the whole Bible but here. Grammarians say, it is compounded of an Hebrew word, which signifies to be greene or flourishing (*Chap:* 8. 16.) and of a Syriack word which signifies *to increase and grow as a plant*; we render it as noting the man mending apace (as some sick men upon recovery doe) in his strength and health. He shall be fresh-coloured, who before was pale and wan, he shall be full-fleshed, who before was fallen and leane; so that, when he saith, *His flesh shall be fresher then a childes*, 'Tis an Elegant hyperbolical expression, to shew his perfect recovery from that mortal sickness to health. As if he had sayd; *God will restore him so, that there shall be no scarr, nor print, no dregs, nor appearance of his former disease seene upon him.* We know how tender and soft, how delicate and faire, the flesh of a little child is, how sweete his countenance is, how full of good blood his veines are, how healthy and strong (as to his time) his whole body is. Thus it shall be with this sick man; *His flesh shall be fresher then a childes*; he shall be as if he were new-borne, or entred a second time upon the stage of this world. Our spirituall estate of renovation by Christ is set forth as a youthfull, or child-like state, as to the purity and perfection of it (*Eph:* 5. 27.) *Christ shall present us to himselfe a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.* The Church hath her sin-spots and wrinckles now in her militancy; but when Christ shall present the Church at last triumphantly to himselfe, then as himselfe was ever without spot or wrinckle, so shall the Church be. Her flesh shall indeed be fresher then a childes, being perfectly recovered out of her spirituall sickness. And thus, in proportion, *Elihu* assures the penitent sick man, that, when his peace is renewed with God, and his spirit set right for God, his very flesh shall be without spot or wrinckle, *fresher then a childes*. The latter part of the verse beares the same sence.

רטפש *mollitur, recreatus fuit, alibi quam hic non legitur. Ex* שוב *quod vivantem significat ac vegetũ (ut cap:* 8.16.) *et* פש *quod Syriacè significat crescere, q. d. revirescet plantarum more et germinum.* Merc:

Notat perfectissimum sanitatis modum, qui nullum transitũ morbi vestigium relinquit. Merc:

He

He shall returne as in the dayes of his youth.

That is, he shall not barely recover his health, and get upon his leggs againe (as we say) he shall not meerely escape death and the grave, but he shall have an addition of bodily ability, he shall, as it were, be young againe. As sickness makes a young man look old, so recovery from sickness makes the old man look young. That's *to returne to the dayes of his youth.*

Hence Note; First.

Bodily beauty, health and strength are the Gift of God.

He gives them, and takes them away at pleasure, or having taken them away, he can give them backe when he pleaseth. *He kills and he makes alive, he bringeth downe to the Grave, and bringeth up*, as *Hannah* sayd in her Song (1 *Sam:* 2. 6.) How low soever a man is brought by sickness, either proper or metaphoricall, the Lord is able to rayse him up againe. We read (*v.* 21.) in how pitifull a plight the sick man was, how rather like a carkasse then a living man he lookt, *His flesh was consumed, that it could not be seene, and his bones which were not seene, stood out*; as much as to say, *He was nothing but skin and bones*; yet, when in that case all hopes were gone, and all natural helps fayled, it was no hard matter with God to cure him. When the skill of the Physician, and the vertue of medicines fayle, the power of God fayleth not. As it is in reference to those outward dangers and desperate exigents, which we meete with in this world by enemies and persecutors, when we look upon our selves as dead men, when all hope of deliverance seems past & gone, then the Lord alwayes can and often doth deliver. The Apostle gives us his experience of it (2 *Cor:* 1. 9, 10.) *We had the sentence of death in our selves*; he spake not thus in regard of sickness, but of trouble and persecution; As if he had sayd, The malice and wrath of our enemies was such, that we thought we should never escape, *we had the sentence of death in our selves*, but providence suffered it to be so, that *we should not trust in our selves, but in God who rayseth the dead.* As it is (I say) in such dangers, so in dangerous deadly sicknesses; when a poore creature hath the sentence of death in himselfe, when he makes no other reckoning but to dye, as good King *Hezekiah* sayd of himselfe in his sickness (*Isa:* 38. 13.) *I*

reckoned till morning, that, as a Lyon, so will he breake all my bones, from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me; yet then as in his case, so in many cases the Lord stretcheth forth a healing hand and takes the sick man up againe, to continue in the land of the living.

Secondly, From the way of expressing this, in allusion to a childe or a youth.

Note.

God he can quickly make the greatest changes in nature, either for the better or for the worse, He can turne youth into old age, and old age into youth.

That is, he can make a young or a healthy man weake as an old man, and an old or sickly man strong as a young man; and as it is with naturall, so with politicall bodyes, as with persons, so with nations. A nation that is flourishing in its youth, heate, strength and glory, rich and full of peace and plenty, God can bring an oldness upon it, and cause it to decline every day. The Prophet spake of the state of *Israel* in this notion (*Hos:* 7. 9.) *Gray haires are here and there upon them, and they perceive it not*; they thought themselves to be in a very youthfull flourishing condition (as a state) but the Lord brought gray haires, that is, they were decaying, withering, weakning, and became a decrepid nation; And when a nation is gray-hayred, old and withered, he can make it youthfull, he can recover the honour and power of it, and cause the dread of it to fall upon the neighbouring nations round about. He turnes a land into a wilderness, which before was as the Garden of God; And he can change that land into a Garden of God which now is a desolate wildernes. The unchangeable Lord is visible and glorious in all these changes. The health and strength both of the body politick and naturall are at his dispose. He can bring a decay upon what is built, and repaire what is decayed, whether in nations or persons. When the earthly house of this Tabernacle is ready to drop downe into the grave, and crumble into dust, God by a word speaking, repayreth it to as much beauty and strength, as when, the first stone being layd, the top-stone was set up. When *Naaman* had once submitted to and obeyed the Prophets counsell, which at first he despised, & washed in *Jorden*, *His flesh* (saith the text, 2 *Kings* 5. 14.) *came againe*

againe like unto the flesh of a little childe. The holy Psalmist charged his owne soule *to praise the Lord, and all that was within him to blesse his holy name* (Psal: 103. 1, 5.) *Who had satisfied his mouth with good things, so that his youth was renewed as the Eagle.* This renovation of his youth may be understood three wayes; First, as to his naturall state, or bodyly strength. Secondly, as to his civill state or worldly successes, as to his honour and kingly renowne. Thirdly, as to his spirituall state, or the hightning of his gifts, graces, and comforts. 'Tis probable, *David* had found a declension in all these, and at last through the goodnes of God and his blessing upon him, the renewing of them all from that oldnes to a youthfullnes againe, like that of Eagles. We find the same allusion in the Prophet (*Isa:* 40. 31.) *They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up as with Eagles wings.* Some Naturalists say, the Eagle renewes her strength by sucking blood when her stomack is so weake that shee cannot feed upon the flesh of her prey. Saints indeed renew their strength as the Eagle, while by faith they sucke the blood of Jesus Christ; and they get cure of their owne weaknesses, while they believingly lay hold upon his strength.

Thirdly, We heard in the former verse of a divine warrant issued out for this mans recovery; *Then he is gracious to him, and saith, deliver him.* Here we have the warrant executed; *His flesh shall be fresher then a childes.*

Hence observe.

The commands and warrants of God are effectuall, they shall be obeyed and made good to man.

If God say, deliver him from a sick bed, he shall be delivered; *I will worke* (saith the Lord, *Isa:* 43. 13, 14.) *and who shall let it? for your sake I have sent to Babylon, and have brought downe all their Nobles*, or *barrs*, as the margin reads it; I will have it done, I will breake all those Nobles who are as barrs in the way of my peoples deliverance. So when the Lord sends his warrant for the delivering of a sick man, he will break all those barrs and bands by which diseases and sicknesses hold him as a prisoner in his bed. Nothing can stand against the word of God: as by a word speaking he gave the creature a being, when it had none (The Lord only spake the word, *Let there be light, let there be a firmament*, &c. *and it was*

so.) Thus also the word or warrant of God reneweth a wel-being to those, with whom it is worst, or a comfortable life to those, who are compassed about with the sorrowes of death. The word of God prevailes over all, or is effectuall to every purpose (*Psal.* 33. 9.) *He spake and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast.*

Further, In this restoring of the sick, we have a shadow of the resurrection. The raysing of a dying man from his bed, is like the raysing of the dead from the grave. The spring of the yeare is a shadow of the resurrection, because then the earth returnes to her youth, and is fresh as a child. In winter all things are dead and desolate, their glosse and beauty is gone; but then cometh the spring and all revives againe, the face of the earth looks fresh, corne and grasse, trees and plants flourish and put forth their buds and blossomes. Now, what the spring of the yeare is to the body of the earth, the same is the returne of health to the body of man; In both we have an exemplar of the resurrection, as also in the regeneration or new birth of the soule, by the power of the holy Ghost. For till then we are, like old sickly men, in the old man, yea we are dead. But no sooner doth the Spirit bring us forth by a second creation into the life of the new man, but we become in spirit fresh like Children, our youth returnes to us againe; that is, we returne to that state wherein we were first created and set up by God in righteousnes and true holines; yea into a better and surer state then that. Man through grace is not only as he was in the first day of his creation, but better; He returnes to the day of his youth, and receives such a youth as shall never decay into old age; yea the older he is in nature, the younger, that is, the stronger and more beautifull he shall be in grace. *He shall* (according to that promise, *Psal.* 92. 14.) *still bring forth fruit in old age, he shall be fat and flourishing.* This renewed youthfullnes and flourishing condition of the restored sick man in spiritualls, is specially and fully set forth in the next verse.

For *Elihu* having shewed the recovery of the sick mans body, he proceeds to the recovery of his soule, which eminently returnes to the dayes of its youth, both in the puttings forth of or exercising the grace of God received, and in receiving more grace, favour, and comfort from God, as will appeare in opening the words.

Vers. 26.

Vers. 26. *He shall pray to God, and he will be favourable to him, and he shall see his face with joy, for he will render to man his righteousnes.*

Elihu gave us, before, one meanes of the sick sinfull mans recovery from his bodyly and soule sickness, that was the counsell and instruction given in by *the messenger, the interpreter, one of a thousand.* And here he sets downe another meanes by which he is restored to both, especially to the sweetnes of both.

He shall pray unto God.

The word here used *to pray*, signifieth not barely to pray, or put up requests to God; 'Tis a word with an emphasis, implying the Multiplying of prayer, and that not the multiplying of prayer so much by number, as by weight; the powring forth or multiplying of strong prayers, or, as it is sayd of Christ, *In the dayes of his flesh* (Heb. 5. 7.) *the offering up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and teares.* There may be a multiplying of weak insignificant words in the eares of God by prayer; But the faithfull people of God, through the Spirit, powre out many strong words in prayer (as Christ did in the dayes of his flesh) to him who is able to save them from death or danger, and give them life. When *Elihu* saith, *He shall pray*, he intends such prayers, even the urgency, importunity, or vehemency of the soule in prayer. When *Isaac* saw his wife *Rebecca* was long barren (he was forty yeares old before he married, and many yeares being elapsed in marriage, there was no appearance of Children) *Then* (saith the Text, *Gen.* 25. 21.) *Isaac intreated the Lord for his wife, because shee was barren, and the Lord was entreated of him, and Rebecca his wife conceived.* It cannot be imagined that *Isaac* being so holy and gracious a man, had not prayed for that mercy before; Doubtless he prayed that God would fullfill the promise to his father *Abraham* in giving him a childe: but when he saw the promise so long delayed, or stick so long in the birth, *then he intreated the Lord* (is this word) he powred out many and strong prayers. The word is used againe concerning *Manoah*, after his wife had received a promise from the Lord of bearing a Son, afterwards called *Sampson* (Judg. 13. 8.) *Then Manoah entreated the Lord, and sayd, O my Lord, let the man of God which thou didst send,*

עתר *multiplicavit, propriè verba sortis ea magnacopia fudit in oratione.*

עתרים *inde Zeph. 3. 10. supplices.*

ſend, come againe unto us, &c. Fearing they might not fully follow the inſtructions given his wife for the education of their ſon, he earneſtly begged of the Lord further direction in that matter. That prophecy either of the Gentiles to be converted, or of the returne of the diſperſed Jewes, expreſſeth them by this word (*Zeph.* 3. 10.) *From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, my ſuppliants ſhall come, even the daughter of my diſperſed ſhall bring mine offerings.* As if the Prophet had ſayd; They ſhall ſpend themſelves in ſupplications at their returne, they ſhall come with ſtrong petitions, with mighty prayers, as making prayer their buſineſs. They ſhall not come with frozen affections and cold requeſts, but with hearts flaming up in the ardency of their deſires, and urgency of their ſupplications to the Lord. That's the force of the word; *He ſhall pray*; As if *Elihu* had ſayd, He ſhall not come with dead-hearted prayers and petitions, (as many doe in their ſickneſſes and ſorrowes) nor with a formal *Lord have mercy upon me, and helpe me*; but he ſhall make a buſineſs of it, he ſhall pray to purpoſe, he ſhall pray with his whole ſtrength. In which ſence the Lord bid *Ananias* goe to *Saul*, afterwards *Paul* (Acts 9. 11.) *For behold he prayeth*; intimating that he had never prayed all his dayes before; nor indeed had he (though being brought up a ſtrict Phariſee, he was much in the forme of prayer) ever prayed in power before.

He ſhall pray.

Some underſtand this, *He*, relating to the meſſenger praying for the ſick man, *He ſhall pray, and God will be favourable to him.* That's a truth, 'tis the worke and duty of the meſſenger to pray for, as well as adviſe the ſick man. But I conceive rather the perſon here intended praying, is the ſick man for himſelfe, who after he hath been counſelled, directed, and adviſed by the meſſenger what to doe, applyeth himſelfe to the doing of it.

Further, Some, who agree that the ſick man is the perſon praying, yet underſtand it of prayer after his recovery; who finding himſelf healed and ſtrengthened prayeth unto God for grace, or for a right uſe of his health & ſtrength. But I rather underſtand it of his prayer unto God in the time of his affliction; who when his ſinsand tranſgreſſions have been laid before him by the meſſenger, and his ſoul-ſoars ſearched to the bottome, and faithfully dealt with,

with, and ſo brought to a ſight of himſelfe, and of his ſin, with the ſad effects of it viſible upon this pained and conſumptive body, is then ſtirred to ſeek the Lord, and entreat his favour; *He ſhall pray unto God*;

Hence Note.

Sickneſſe is a prayer-ſeaſon.

Prayer is a duty never out of ſeaſon, yet at ſome times more in ſeaſon, and moſt in ſeaſon in times of affliction; *Is any man afflicted, let him pray*, (*James* 5. 13.) And among all afflictions the affliction of ſickneſs ſeemes to be a ſpeciall ſeaſon calling for this duty. Therefore in the 14 verſe of the ſame Chapter, aſſoon as he had ſaid, *is any man afflicted, let him pray*, it followeth, *is any ſick among you, let him call for the Elders of the Church, and let them pray over him*; 'Tis high time for us when ſick to look about us, to call in prayer-aide, or helpe from others in prayer; yet 'tis not enough for the afflicted, or the ſick to get others to pray for them, they muſt pray for themſelves: ſome put off the duty of prayer to others, and think it ſufficeth if they ſend bills to miniſters or move friends to pray for them. I know ſickneſs indiſpoſeth to prayer, bodily paine and weakneſs hinder continuance and abiding in the duty; but that doth not excuſe the ſick from praying for themſelves. To deſire others to pray for us in bodyly ſickneſs, and neglect it our ſelves is an ill ſymptome of a ſick ſoul; yea to deſire others in that caſe to pray for us, when we have no heart to pray for our ſelves, is too cleare a prognoſtick that their prayers will not profit us, nor be prevailing for us. *Pharoah*, when under thoſe dreadfull plagues, could ſend for *Moſes* and *Aaron* more then once, and ſaid unto them, *entreat the Lord for me*, (Exod. 9. 27, 28. *Chap.* 10. 16, 17.) But we read not that he entreated the Lord for himſelf. *Simon Magus* when ſtruck with the terrible threatnings of *Peter*, ſaid, *Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of theſe things which ye have ſpoken come upon me.* (Acts 8. 24.) But we read not that he prayed for himſelf. *The prayers of others are rarely beneficiall to any, unleſſe they either pray or have a deſire to pray for themſelves. Elihu* repreſents the ſick man praying for himſelf, *he ſhall pray*

Unto God. There's the object of prayer.

Hence

Hence Note.

Prayer in sickneſſe, and in all other caſes muſt be directed unto God, and to him only.

Divine addreſſes are fit for none but God; For Firſt, none are worthy of this honour but God; Prayer is ſo great a part of that honour and worſhip which is due to God, that it is often put for his whole worſhip. *Mine houſe* (ſaith the Lord, *Iſa.* 56. 7.) *ſhall be called an houſe of prayer for all Nations.* Secondly, none can heare, that is, anſwer prayer but God; there is no help to be had but in him. As it is his glory to be prayed to, and ſuch a glory as he will not part with to any other, ſo it is in vaine to pray to any other. *In vaine is ſalvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of Mountains* (that is, from the greateſt worldly Powers) *truly in the Lord our God is the ſalvation of Iſrael,* (*Jerem.* 3. 23.) God only was *David's Hills* (*Pſal.* 121. 1, 2.) *I Lift my eyes to the hills from whence cometh my helpe*; what theſe *hills* were, himſelfe explaines in the next verſe. *My help cometh from the Lord who made heaven and earth*; *Baals* Prieſts called upon *Baal, they cryed Baal hear us*, but ſaith the Text, *there was neither voyce, nor any that anſwered* (1 *Kings* 18. 26.) It is not only ſinfull, but ſenceleſs to pray to any other then God alone. That popiſh Doctrine of invocation to Saints and Angells, is not only a will-worſhip, but folly and dotage.

Fourthly, *He ſhall pray*, &c.

Hence Obſerve.

If we would have any mercy from God, we muſt ask it.

God is ready to give, but he looks to be intreated, and he will be intreated: What God hath promiſed to doe for us, his doing of it muſt be obtained by prayer. Working prayer, worketh the promiſes to their iſſue, yea prayer worketh the prophecies, whether of ſalvation upon *Sion*, or ruine upon *Babylon* to their iſſue. Promiſes and propheſies are the expreſs will of God, and ſhall certainly be fullfilled in their ſeaſon; yet if we deſire their fullfilling, we muſt pray that he would fullfill them; and 'tis a token for good that God is about to fullfill them, when the hearts of his people are drawne out much in prayer for their fullfilling. There are ſome mercies, in the promiſes, rightly called preventing mercies, they come upon us before we ask; ſuch is the mercy of our vocation, converſion or turning to God; we are naturally ſo far from praying while we are in the ſtate of nature, that we are continually blaſpheming or diſhonouring the name of God; but, as for perſons converted, (who are eminently called heires of the promiſe, that is, of the good in the promiſe) if they will have any good out of a promiſe, they muſt aske it. When the Prophet had declared many propheſies of good and great and glorious things which God would doe for his people, he concludes with this direction from the Lord. (*Ezek.* 36. 37.) *I will yet for this be enquired of by the houſe of Iſrael to doe it for them.* As if the Lord had ſaid, *I will not doe theſe things unasked*, as you looke I ſhould doe theſe things for you, ſo I look you ſhould pray unto me that they may be done. A promiſe was made to *Abraham* (*Gen.* 22. 17.) that his ſeed ſhould be multiplyed as the Stars of Heaven; now might not *Iſaac* his Son have ſaid, God hath promiſed me children, what need I pray for them? but *Iſaac* knew better, he knew that the promiſe was to be brought to the birth by prayer, therefore he entreated the Lord that he might have children.

Fifthly, from theſe words *He ſhall pray* compared with the next, *and he* (that is God) *will be favourable to him.*

Obſerve.

The Lord is ready to hear when we pray, ready to give when we ask.

As prayer is honourable and delightfull to God, ſo fruitfull to man. *Ask and it ſhall be given you, ſeek and you ſhall find* (Math. 7. 7.) *He ſhall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him.* Prayer ſhall not be loſt, nor vaniſh into aire. There was never any faithfull prayer loſt; though the prayers of many have not been anſwered in kind, that is, they have not had the very thing they asked for; yet they have had an anſwer to their prayers; and though prayer be not alwayes anſwered in our time, yet there is a time wherein all faithfull prayers ſhall be anſwered; one age reaps the fruit of thoſe prayers which another age hath ſowne. The ſeed time is one age, the harveſt in another. Latter Generations get good by the prayers of the former. Though we who pray ſee not the fruit of it, yet many ſhall find the fruit of it; and how often

often doth the fruit of prayer appear preſently, how often doth the anſwer come in upon the very putting up of the requeſt? (Iſa. 65. 24.) *Before they call, I will anſwer, and while as they are yet ſpeaking, I will hear.* While the word is in their mouth, the mercy ſhall be put into their hand. While the Church (*Acts* 12. 5. 16.) was praying, *Peter* came in among them. As if God had ſaid, *there's your prayer.* What the Prophet *Eliſha* ſaid (*2 Kings* 6. 33.) of the meſſenger ſent to apprehend him; *Is not the ſound of his Maſters feet behind him?* The ſame may we ſay ſomtimes of this meſſenger holy and fervent prayer, is not the *ſound of the mercy prayed for at the very heels of it?* Thus cloſe doth *Elihu* put the ſick mans prayer and the anſwer of God, *he ſhall pray unto God,*

And he will be favourable unto him.

רצה *Græcis* εὐδοκεῖν, *ſignificat vehementer velle ac deleſtari. Mercer.*

That is, he ſhall have a gracious and a ſpeedy anſwer; *he will be favourable unto him*, or, *he will accept him*, as Mr. *Broughton* renders: 'Tis a very comfortable word, it notes not only to *wiſh well to, or to be at peace, but to be well pleaſed with another, yea to be delighted, and take pleaſure in him.* 'Tis not barely, to be appeaſed and reconciled, to lay down wrath and diſpleaſure conceived againſt a man, but it notes much ſweetneſs of ſpirit towards him, and full content or complacency in him (*Pſal.* 149. 4.) *The Lord taketh pleaſure in his people*, (they are as the joy of his heart) *he will beautifie the meek with ſalvation*; he will not only ſave them, but adorne them with ſalvation; they ſhall not only be delivered (after they have layen among the pots, *Pſal.* 68. 13.) from the blackneſs and filth of their adverſity, but they ſhall have a beauty put upon them, or (as it followeth in that *Pſalme* laſt cited) *They ſhall be as the wings of a Dove covered with ſilver, and her feathers with yellow gold. God will be favourable* to them, that is, he will give them *favours* to wear for him, he will put *markes* of honour upon them, they ſhall not only be benifited, but beautified and crowned with ſalvation.

God expreſſed that higheſt favour and moſt indeared affection which he bare to his own Son, as ſerving him, by no better nor more emphaticall word then this (*Iſa.* 42. 1.) *Behold my ſervant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my ſoul delighteth.* What is or can be more delightfull to God then his Son? and what can be more comfortable to man, then to hear and know, that God delighteth in him, and bears favour to him (through his Son) with the ſame affection as he doth to his only begotten Son? *He will be favourable unto him.*

Whence note.

First, *God is well pleaſed with, he is favourable to, and delighted in an humble ſinner.*

When a ſinner is brought upon his knees and becomes a ſuppliant, when as he is laid low by affliction, ſo he lyeth low in prayer and ſupplication, then the Lord will be favourable to him, and ſhew his delight in him. The Lord delighteth not in the ſtrength of the horſe, he taketh not pleaſure in the legs of a man (*Pſ.* 147. 10, 11.) No man is favoured by God, becauſe of his outward favour, becauſe he hath a beautifull face, or ſtrong cleane limbs; yea not only hath the Lord no pleaſure in any mans legs, but not in any mans braines, how reaching ſoever, nor in any mans wit how quick ſoever, nor in any mans judgment how deep ſoever, nor in any mans tongue how eloquent or well ſpoken ſoever, but the Lord *taketh pleaſure in them that fear him, in thoſe that hope in his mercy; in thoſe that walk humbly with him, and call upon him. Let me* (ſaith Chriſt to his Spouſe, *Cant.* 2. 14.) *hear thy voyce for it is ſweet*; he meanes it not of an artificiall ſinging voyce, but of a ſpirituall praying voyce. That's the muſick which the Church makes for Chriſt. Nothing is ſo tunable nor takes the eare and heart of Chriſt, like the voyce of prayer and praiſe from a gracious heart. All the beauties and rarities both of perſons and things are dull and flat, yea weariſome and loathſome to God in compariſon of a gracious, honeſt, humble ſoul. Princes have their favourites (they are according to the language of this Text) favourable to ſome above many, either becauſe they are beautifull and goodly perſons, or becauſe they are men of excellent ſpeech, prudence and comportment. All godly men are Gods Favourites, he is favourable to them not only above many men in the world, but above all the men of this world, who have their portion in this life; And he therefore favours them; becauſe they are the purchaſe of his Son, and the workmanſhip of his Spirit, convincing them of, and humbling them for their ſins, as alſo creating them after God in righteouſneſs and true holineſs. *Such ſhall be his favourites.*

Secondly, Conſider the coherence or dependance of theſe words, *He ſhall call unto God, and he will be favourable unto him.* Whereas, before, all his complainings and outcryes ſtood him in no ſtead, now being humbled effectually, and taking hold of the righteouſneſs ſhewed and offered him by the Meſſenger of God, he no ſooner makes ſuit to God but is heard.

Hence Note.

God firſt ſhewes regard to the perſon, then to the offering, to prayers and ſervices.

This truth may be underſtood two wayes. First, in reference to the ſtate of grace. When *Abel* and *Cain* brought their ſacrifices or offerings, *God had reſpect to Abel and his offering*, but to *Cain and his offering had no reſpect*, (Gen. 4. 4, 5.) *Abel* was in a ſtate of grace, *Cain* was not, ſo the Apoſtle ſtates their caſe, (*Heb.* 11. 4.) *By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent ſacrifice then Cain, by which he obtained witneſſe that he* (his perſon) *was righteous, God teſtifying of his gifts*; and what did he teſtifie? ſurely that his gifts were brought in faith, and were preſented from a principle of grace, which *Cain* had not; and therefore God did not approvingly teſtifie of his gifts. Till we cloſe with God by faith, God doth not cloſe with our ſervices by acceptance. Secondly, as this is true in reference to the ſtate of grace, ſo in reference to ſomewhat in the preſent actings or diſpoſitions of thoſe who are gracious. 'Tis poſſible for a godly man to act ſo ſinfully, and to be ſo ill diſpoſed to the frame of his heart, that God may ſeem to deny acceptation to his prayers, and ſervices. *David* ſaid (*Pſal.* 66. 18.) *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not heare me.* And God told the Jewes, his Covenant people, (*Iſa.* 1. 15.) *When ye make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood.* Thus while they who have a ſtate intereſt in Chriſt, walke unworthy of it, they are under the frownes of God, and his diſ-acceptation of all their duties, till they renew their repentance and humble themſelves. And I conceive this was the caſe of the ſick man in the Text (in whom doubtleſſe, he aimed at *Job*) whom *Elihu* granted to be a godly man, yet under great diſtempers of ſpirit, which muſt be healed & removed before he could ſo call upon or pray unto God, as he would be favourable to him, or give him teſtimonie of his favour. Thus we

we ſee, in both theſe references, how the perſon of a man muſt be reſpected and in favour before his prayers can. For as we can have no benefit by the interceſſion of Chriſt, till we accept his perſon, ſo God will not give us any benefit by our ſupplications, till himſelf accepteth our perſons, which he doth only in Chriſt. Many would be ſaved by Chriſt, they would be pardoned and get to heaven, they would enjoy the benefits and priviledges which he hath purchaſed for his people, but they neglect Chriſt himſelf; nor doe they think of cloſing with his perſon. Now, I ſay, as unleſſe we have reſpect to the perſon of Chriſt, and deſire union with him, we have nothing to doe with his benefits; ſo unleſs God hath reſpect to our perſons, we get no benefit, no anſwer of our prayers.

Thirdly, Note.

To have the favour of God, or to be accepted with him, is the top and ſumme of all deſireable favours.

'Tis the Alpha and Omega, the firſt and laſt of all other favours, to find God favourable to us; if God be favourable to us, it matters not much who frowns upon us, or what foul weather we meet with in this world. And, as to be in his favour ſhould be the chief of all our deſires, ſo to be aſſured of his favour ſhould be the chief of all our ſtudies and cares (2 *Cor.* 5. 7.) *Herein* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *we labour, that whether preſent or abſent we may be accepted of him.* The word notes to labour ambitiouſly; as if he had ſaid, we labour as much for the favour of God, as ever any of the ſons of ambition laboured for the favour of Princes, or regard with the Kings of this world. No man ever plotted or flatter'd and crouched ſo much to the Kings of the earth for favour, as we doe to God for favour; *herein we labour.* We make it our buſineſs to be accepted with him; if God once accept a man, you may turne him looſe, he will ſhift for one. How compleately happy the condition of ſuch a favourite is, will appeare yet further in opening the next clauſe of this verſe.

And he ſhall ſee his face with joy.

When once God is favourable to a poor ſinner, then he ſhall be *uſed or dealt with like a favourite.* Great Favourites ſtand in the preſence of Princes, and frequently ſee their faces. Whoſoever

soever any man favours he freely admits to his presence, and takes delight in his company. Thus *Elihu* speaks of Gods Favourite, *He shall see his face with joy.*

There is a twofold interpretation of these words tending both to the same spirituall sence.

Videbit deus faciem ejus cum lætitia, i.e. hilaritèr cum invenietur, vultu læto et facili eum respiciet, cum ante vultum iratus avertebat. Merc:

First, Some by the Antecedent *He*, understand God himselfe, and by *his face* the face of the humbled sick man; and so the sence of this assertion, *he shall see his face with joy*, is plainly, this, God will look cheerfully and smilingly upon the face of this poor supplicant; God will look upon him, as we doe upon friends whom we favour and have much respect for. Friends may see content and joy shining in or stampt upon our faces, when we look them in the face. The content which we take in seeing the face of another is visible in the smiles and joyes of our own faces. As when we look sowrely, angryly, sorrowfully, sullenly upon a man, when darkness is seen in our faces, and clouds gather in our brows, ready to dissolve into a storme, this speaks we beare him no good will, or rather that we bear him much displeasure. So when we looke pleasantly upon a man, doth it not say, that we are highly pleased with him? To be sure, when God is at peace with a repenting sinner, he no longer frownes upon him, nor turns his face from him as an enemy, but entertaines and welcomes him as a friend; which is directly opposite to *Jobs* apprehension of God at the 10th verse of this Chapter, *Behold he findeth occasions against me, he counteth me for his enemy.* This is a sweet soul-reviving and ravishing truth. God beholds the face of his people with joy, he beholds them smileingly, cheerfully, delightfully. *David* calls it *The light of Gods countenance* (Psal. 4. 6.)

Et videbit (homo) faciem dei cum jubilo. Merc:

Secondly, (and I rather conceive that to be the meaning of the place) most relate the *He*, to the sick man; who having been upon his knees humbling himself before God, and finding God favourable to him, he then seeth his face, that is, the face of God, *with joy.* God fills his soule with a great deale of peace, comfort, and sweetnes in his approaches to him. Before, possibly, if he did but think upon God, he was troubled as *Asaph* found (*Psal.* 77. 3.) *I remembred God, and was troubled.* To a man in great trouble, especially in trouble of mind, the very thoughts of God (who is our only help in trouble) may be troublesom; but when he is set right and restored to the favour of God, or God being again favou-

favourable unto him, he beholds his face with abundance of joy. Here are yet two things to be opened, or two Queries may be made and answered for the clearing of these words.

First, What is meant by the *face of God*; Secondly, what is meant by *seeing his face.*

To the former query, I answer; First, the face of God is the essentiall being or perfect Majesty of God, of which himself saith to *Moses* (*Exod.* 33. 23.) *My face shall not be seen.* Secondly, the good will and favour of God is his face (*Ps.* 80. 3.) *Cause thy face to shine*, (that is, be good to us) *and we shall be saved.* Thirdly, the *face of God* in Scripture is put for any manifestations of God to man. God manifesteth himself in wrath to some men, (*Psal.* 34. 16.) *The face of the Lord is against them that doe evill;* That is, he is angry and greatly displeased with them. He manifesteth himself in love to others, and all such are said either (as Drus: in the Text) to see his face, or (as other Texts expres it) to have his face shining upon them. God is a spirit, he hath no face properly; but as the face of a man is that, by which he is knowne (if a man hide his face we know not who he is, though we see all the other parts of his body, he is a concealed man) so that whatsoever it is, by which God is clearly knowne, that in Scripture language is called his face. And hence Thirdly, the worship and holy ordinances of God, are called the face of God (*Gen.* 4. 14.) because they are great manifestations of God, or because God is manifested in his Ordinances, in his word and worship, who and what he is. After a sick man, through the help of God, is recovered; he goes into the congregation to give thanks; and then he may be said to see the face of God, because there he exhibits the signs of his presence, & doth as it were shew his face. There as in a glass we behold the face of God, that is, the discoveries of his holines, of his love & goodnes; The face of God is seen in his works, as the Apostle teacheth us, (*Rom.* 1. 20.) *The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternall power and godhead:* much more in his word and Ordinances, and above all in Jesus Christ is God seen and manifested. Jesus Christ is the face of God, *the brightnesse of his glory, the expresse image of his person,* (*Heb.* 1. 3.) *The light of the knowledge of the glory of God shineth to us in the face of Christ.* Thus the face of God is beheld in

Facies dei iram, quandoque favorem notat.

the

the face of Christ. There we may see how holy, how just, how good, and mercifull God is; all this glory of God appeareth to us in the face of Christ, who is the highest manifestation of God. Here in the Text by the face of God, we are to understand any demonstration of Gods favourable presence; in which sence of the word, *Aaron* was to blesse the children of *Israel* (*Numb.* 6. 25.) *The Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.* That is, the Lord manifest himself to thee in wayes of grace and peace, in favour and in mercy. *David* prayed in the same stile (*Psal.* 67. 1.) *God be mercifull to us, and bless us, and cause his face to shine upon us*; that is, give us tokens and pledges of his favour.

Secondly, *How see we the face of God?* Doth not God tell *Moses*, *No man can see my face and live.* How then can the face of God be seene?

I answer; The face of God (which was touched before) as taken for the essence of God, or for his essentiall glory, cannot be seene; That's too transcendent a glory for man to behold. What we see of God is but some ray or beaming out of light and glory from himselfe, we cannot see himselfe. The essentiall or personall glory of God, is that face which cannot be seene, but the declarative glory of God is a face of God which may be clearely seene by faith in the light of his word and workes. And to see the face of God, is nothing else but for a man to *know in himselfe* (as the Apostles word is in somewhat a parallel case, *Heb:* 10. 34.) that God is gracious to him, that is, to have an assurance of his favour, or a reflect act of faith about it. The holy Spirit sheweth us what God is, and what the things of God are (1 *Cor:* 2. 12.) *We have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God*; that is, that we may be enlightned with the knowledge of the grace, goodnesse, and favour of God to us discovered in the Gospel. The Spirit sheweth us this blessed face of God, and we see it by the actings of our faith; all our visions of God in this life are visions of faith; upon whose wings all our intellectuall powers soare aloft and are carried up to God. Faith is not only a worke of the will in consent and application, but a worke of the understanding by assent and knowledge. Thus we see

see God (as a Spirit is only to be seene) with a spirituall eye. The vision of God is intellectuall, the vision of faith. Thus the reconciled sinner finding God favourable to him; he *seeth his face*

with joy.

Videre faciem dei, nihil aliud est quam sentire apud animum suum deum propitium. Coc:

The word signifies joyfull acclamation, or shouting for joy, such as men use after great favours done them and benefits or rather bounties bestowed upon them. There is a seeing of the face of God with terror; so the wicked shall see God, that is, they shall have manifestations of Gods displeasure; they shall be made to see him with shame and sorrow: They shall say (when they see him) to the *mountaines and rockes, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lambe.* They who never saw the face of God with joy, shall see it with horror & amazement. Saints see it with joy, they have unexpressible comfort and contentment in beholding God; they shall rejoyce with shouting, as in the yeare of *Jubile*, when they sounded out their joyes with trumpets, or made a joyfull noyse. 'Tis no ordinary but a triumphant joy, with which the godly see the face of God. Extraordinary sights affect with extraordinary joy. Now the face of God being the highest and most glorious sight in the world, it must needs affect the beholder with a glorious with a *Jubilean joy. He shall see his face with joy.*

In Jubilo. *i.e. in quodam inexplicabili gaudio.* Aquin:

First, It being sayd, *He shall see his face with joy*, upon his prayer, and the humbling of himselfe before God.

Observe.

God hides or vayles his face, till we humble our soules and seeke his face.

God will not be seene at all times, no not by his owne people; There are severall cases in which he turneth away his face in anger, or drawes a curtaine (as it were) yea a cloud between himselfe and the soule. And this he doth, First, and most usually to try his people, how they can beare his withdrawings, and to see whether or to what they will betake themselves, when he takes himselfe so much from them, that they cannot see him. Secondly, He doth it often to chasten and correct man for sin.

To be under the hidings of Gods face, is the ſaddeſt effect of ſin to a ſencible or an awakened ſoule. *David* made a grievous complaint becauſe of this, what ever the cauſe or occaſion of it was. (*Pſal:* 13. 1.) The abſence of God from him (though poſſibly but for a ſhort time) was ſo tedious to him, that he cryed out, *How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord, for ever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?* Even Jeſus Chriſt while he ſtood in the place of ſinners, bare the hiding of his fathers face, as the ſumme of all thoſe puniſhments which were due to and deſerved by our ſin. This preſſed him more then all bodyly ſufferings, and made him cry out, while he hung upon the Croſſe, *My God, my God* (not why haſt thou left me to be crucified, but) *why haſt thou forſaken me* (Math: 27.46.) Thirdly, God hideth his face from ſome, becauſe the manifeſtations of it have not been received thankfully, nor improved rightly. We ought to give thankes for the light of the Sun ſhining in the ayre, and alſo doe our worke in it; Is it any wonder if God cloud and eclipſe the light of his countenance towards thoſe, who neither prize it, nor improve it? If you would alwayes ſee the face of God, then be ye alwayes ſeene at the worke and in the wayes of God.

Secondly, Obſerve.

It is the ſole priviledge of Gods Favourites, or of thoſe to whom he is favourable, to ſee his face.

As no man can ſee that face of God, his eſſentiall preſence, ſo none but Godly men ſhall ſee this face of God, his comfortable or bleſſed-making preſence. *Without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord* (Heb: 12. 14.) There is a two-fold viſion or ſight of God, and that negative aſſertion may be underſtood of either or of both. There's firſt, a viſion of God on earth; thus we ſee his face, as was ſhewed before, in the actings of faith; For though the Apoſtle oppoſeth theſe two, faith and ſight; *We walke by faith, and not by ſight* (2 Cor: 5. 7.) yet faith hath its ſight; we walke not by ſight as the worldly men walk, who doe as they ſee, and make their eyes both the guide of their conſciences, and the in-bringers of their comforts; we walke not by outward ſight, nor doe we make concluſions how to guide our converſations, by what we ſee. We walke by faith, and that's the ſight which we have of God while we are here on earth, which cannot poſſibly be without

out holineſs; faith being ſo great a part of our holineſs, and (by drawing vertue from Chriſt dayly) the maintainer of it all. Secondly, there is a ſight of the face of God in glory. And if none can enter into glory but holy men, then no man without holineſs can ſee the face of God there. Thus Chriſt ſaith of the Angells, *They alwayes behold the face of my father which is in heaven* (*Math:* 18. 10.) Now we ſee the face of God darkly as in a glaſſe (1 *Cor:* 13. 12.) that is, in his word and workes, in his ordinances and appoyntments; in theſe we have glimpſes of the face of God, but *we ſhall ſee him face to face*; that is, as fully and comprehenſively as creatures can; we can never comprehend God, but we ſhall have comprehenſions of God ſo farre, as finite can take in the fruitions of Infinite. *We ſhall ſee his face with joy.*

Thirdly, Note.

It is the greateſt joy and happineſs of man imaginable to ſee the face of God.

Any manifeſtation of God is a joyfull favour, and a full manifeſtation of him fills the heart with joy; *Lord lift up the light of thy countenance upon us* (ſaith *David*, Pſal: 4. 6, 7.) *thou haſt put gladneſs in my heart more then in the time their corne and wine increaſed*; As if he had ſayd, I rejoyce in thy favour more then worldlings doe in their beſt enjoyments. *Shew us the father and it ſufficeth us*, ſayd *Philip* (John 14. 8.) let us have but that favour, and we deſire no more; we have enough, we can have no more, if we may *but ſee the father*. True joy ſtands not in any ſights, nor in the ſight of any thing here below, but in the ſight of God above while we are below, and in a hope that we ſhall at laſt get above too, and there have an everlaſting ſight of him, *in whoſe preſence is fullneſs of joy, and at whoſe right hand are pleaſures for evermore*. We read in the Leviticall Law, *of the ſhew-bread*, which was to be ſet in the holy place, upon a Table (*Exod:* 25. 30.) The Hebrew is, *the bread of faces*. There are two reaſons of this denomination; Firſt, Becauſe that Bread did ſhew the gracious proviſion that God made for them all the way they journeyed from *Egypt* to *Canaan*, or that he ſpread a Table for them in the wilderneſs where they had no harveſt; To which the Prophet may allude (*Jer:* 2. 2.) *I remember* (ſaith the Lord)

the kindneſs of thy youth, the love of thy eſpouſalls, when thou went eſt after me in a land that was not ſowne; that is, when thou didſt truſt me for thy dayly bread. Secondly, It was called the *ſhew-bread*, to teſtifie the ſpeciall preſence of God with them, and that his eye was alwayes upon them, ready to do them good upon all occaſions. This was the high priviledge of the Jewes then, they had the *bread of faces*; and this is the joy of the people of God now, that what ever good they have, it is the face of God to them; their bread is the *bread of faces*, and their wine is the wine of faces, &c. that is, they are a ſignification of the favour and love of God to them, or they look upon the love and favour of God manifeſted in thoſe things, much more then upon the things themſelves. Now if it be ſo great a mercy to have ſome manifeſtation of the face or favour of God, or that we are alwayes in the ſight and view of God; What will it be to us when we ſhall alwayes abide in the preſence of God, and ſee his face with joy?

Laſtly, Note.

A juſtified perſon hath confidence to looke up to and thinke of God; He doth it with joy; and that's the fruit of a well-grounded confidence.

Where the Spirit of the Lord is (ſaith the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor:* 3. 17.) *there is liberty;* a liberty of addreſſe and approach to God, a liberty alſo of ſpeech and prayer to God. True godlineſs hath much well regulated boldneſs with God; and as a Godly man ought with reverence, ſo he can with a wel-grounded confidence looke God in the face.

For he will render unto man his righteouſneſs.

This latter part of the verſe giveth an account of the ground of that joy which the ſick man found in ſeeing the face of God. *He ſhall ſee his face with joy* (ſaith *Elihu*) *for he* (that is, God) *ſhall render unto man his righteouſneſs.*

ושוב a radice שוב *He ſhall render*; The Hebrew is, *he will make to returne*; The word ſignifieth, Firſt, to returne to a place from whence we have departed (*Gen:* 18. 10.) Secondly, to return or turn from that diſpleaſure which was once conceived. When the Lord, is, as it were, in a hot purſuit of ſinners, he returns or turns from his anger. The Prophet ſpeakes in the negative (*Iſa:* 5. 25.) *For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is ſtretched out ſtill*, or he is not returned from his anger. Thirdly, The word is uſed to note mans return unto God by repentance (*Deut:* 30. 28.) We by ſin turn away from God, and by repentance we return to him. Fourthly, It ſignifieth to returne by way of requitall (*Pſal:* 116. 12.) *What ſhall I render unto the Lord* (It is this word) or, *What ſhall I return to the Lord for all his benefits? David* was in an holy muſe or maze, what teſtimony of thankfulneſs he ſhould bring to the Lord. *What ſhall I render?* And in that ſence it is attributed both to God and man; ſometimes in relation to evill done, and then it notes to render puniſhment or revenge (*Pſal:* 28. 4.) *Render to them their deſert*, ſo the word is uſed by *Joſephs* brethren (*Gen:* 50. 15.) *He will certainly requite us all the evill which we did unto him*; they were jealous of their brothers love when their father was dead. And as it notes a return of evill done in way of revenge, ſo alſo a return of good done in way of reward, thus here.

He will render unto man.

It is an indefinite aſſertion, not to this or that man, but to man. *With God there is no reſpect of perſons, but he that worketh righteouſneſs* (let him be who he will) *is accepted of him.* To man, that is, to every man God will render

his righteouſneſs.

Righteouſneſs is of two ſorts; Firſt, There is the righteouſneſs of our ſanctification, which conſiſts; Firſt, in our turning from or leaving to doe evill; Secondly, in our doing good: this is a righteouſneſs wrought by us and dwelling or inherent in us. The Hebrewes by this word often expreſſe that which we call *almes or charity*; and the reaſon is two-fold, why almes or acts of charity are expreſſed by that word which ſignifieth righteouſneſs; Firſt, becauſe our charity or our almes muſt be given of thoſe things that are rightly gotten. We muſt not doe unjuſtly that we may be charitable, nor wrong ſome to relieve others. Secondly, becauſe charity and almes is a due or right to the poor that are in want; we call it charity, but it is a work of duty (*Prov:* 3. 27.) therefore 'tis well expreſſed by *righteouſneſs*. He ſhall render unto man *his righteouſneſs* or *beneficence*. We may take it in this large

large fence; for this also is a part of our sanctification. And when it is sayd, he will render unto man *his righteousnes*, we are not to understand it of righteousnes in kinde, but of the reward or fruit of his righteousnes. For here *Elihu* speaks of a person already righteous, or at least of him who had repented of and turned from his unrighteousnes. So that, to *returne* or render unto man *his righteousnes*, is to returne the mercy promised to those that are righteous. For as iniquity or unrighteousnes is often put for the punishment of unrighteousnes; so equity or righteousnes is often put for the reward of righteousnes, or for that which God according to his righteous promise returnes unto a righteous person. Thus we may understand *Elihu* here. As if he had sayd, *God dealt with this man before, as with a sinner, or he afflicted him for his sin; But now he will deale kindly with him as with a righteous person, and removing his affliction, and taking his hand off from him, he will render his righteousnes to him, he will not reckon with him for any former unrighteousnes.*

Reddet justitiam. i.e. præmium justitiæ. Drus.

From this notion of the word, Observe.

God usually deals with men as they are, and according to what they doe.

If a godly man sin he shall smart for it; and if a sinner return and repent, God will shew him kindnes. Though the mercy and kindnes which God shews to a returning sinner, be not for his returnings or repentings, yet 'tis according to them. The favour which God sheweth any man is for Christs sake, or for what Christ hath done and suffered, but it is according to what himselfe hath done or suffered. *David* experienced this himselfe (*Psal:* 18.20.) *The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousnes*, &c. That is, as I have been a righteous and just person, so the Lord hath dealt with me. And he gives the rule with respect to all others (*v.* 25.) *With the upright thou wilt shew thy selfe upright, with the pure thou wilt shew thy selfe pure*, &c. That is, Thou wilt be such to men in thy dispensations, as they are in their conversations and dispositions, in the frame and bent of their hearts and lives. And as it followeth (*v.* 27.) *Thou wilt save the afflicted* (or humble) *people; but wilt bring downe high lookes*; that is, those that are proud and high-minded. The Prophet holds out the same truth in way of direction (*Isa:* 3. 10.) *Say ye to the righteous, it shall be*

well with him, for they shall eat of the fruit of their doings; that is, they shall have good for the good they have done, or according to the good which they have done. (*Rom:* 2. 10.) *Glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.*

If any object; But may it not be ill with men that doe good and are good? doth the Lord always render to man according to his righteousnes.

I answer; It is well at present with most that doe well; look over all the sons of men, and generally ye shall find that usually the better they are, the better they live.

Secondly, I answer; It shall be well with all that doe well in the issue, and for ever. This truth will abide to eternity; *God will render unto man according to his righteousnes.*

Secondly, We may take the word *righteousnes*, for the righteousnes of justification; Mr *Broughton* inclines to that sence, *He will restore unto man his justice.* And presently adds by way of glosse; *Justice is Christ*; It is Christs Justice or righteousnes that is restored to man. Christ is indeed *The Lord our righteousnes* (Jer: 23. 6.) And thus severall others of the learned expound these words. *He will render unto man his righteousnes*; That is, he will bestow upon him or restore to him righteousnes in Christ; he will account him righteous, though he hath no righteousnes of his owne which will hold in Gods account. *Elihu*, I grant, calleth it *Mans righteousnes, his righteousnes*; yet we may well understand him calling it so, not because it is wrought by but because it is imputed to or bestowed upon man as his righteousnes. *That is ours which is freely given us*, so is righteousnes in justification by faith in Christ. We have no righteousnes wrought in us or by us, for that purpose; but we have a righteousnes wrought for us, and freely bestowed upon us, for that purpose, which is therefore truely called *mans righteousnes.*

Justiam, quam ei confert in Christo, reputans eum pro justo. Jun:

But some may question, how can it be sayd, that God doth render or return to man this righteousnes, that is, the righteousnes of justification? Can this righteousnes be lost? can a person justified fall out of a justified state?

I answer; The righteousnes of justification (which is true also of the righteousnes of sanctification) as to the substance and being of it cannot be lost; But it may be lost as to the comfortable

ble enjoyments and fruits of it, or as to our apprehenſion of it; And the Lord is ſayd to returne to man the righteouſneſs of his juſtification, not as if the grace it ſelfe were loſt or taken away from him, but becauſe the ſight and ſence of it, the ſweetneſs and joy of it, the workings and effects of it having been loſt, are now reſtored to him againe. When the Lord by his Spirit gives the ſoule a cleare and freſh evidence of it, or reneweth the teſtimony of his Spirit with our ſpirits, that our ſins are forgiven, and that we are juſtified, beloved, and accepted in Chriſt, then the Lord is ſayd to render unto man his righteouſneſs; otherwiſe, neither the faith, by which this righteouſneſs is applyed, nor the righteouſneſs it ſelfe which is applyed to us by faith, is at any time loſt or removed. Only in this ſence, as in many other Scriptures, ſo in this, the Lord is ſayd to render unto man his righteouſneſs, both of ſanctification and juſtification. For, when a beleever through ſin hath blotted his own evidences, and God hath left him under the darkneſs of his own ſpirit, for his negligent, unwatchfull & unworthy walking, or when the Lord hideth his face, to try him what he will doe, whether *he will truſt in his name while he walketh in darkneſs and ſeeth no light*, when, I ſay, after withdrawings for either of theſe reaſons or for any other the Lord gives him in a renewed evidence of his love, then he is ſayd to *render unto man his righteouſneſs*. It is in this caſe as with a man that labours under ſome ſtrong and dangerous diſeaſe, which taketh away his ſences, and leaves him halfe dead; we ſay, the man is gone, yet he recovers, his ſpeech returnes, and his ſpirits revive, and then we ſay, *his life is rendred to him*, or he is brought back from the grave, we have fetched him againe; not that his life was quite taken away (for he was not a carkaſſe in that condition, a body without a ſoule) but his life was, for that time, withdrawne, there was no appearance of it, no ſencible breathing, no motion, no vitall viſible operation. Thus we may conceive what is meant by the rendring unto man *his righteouſneſs*.

Non enim ablata juſtitia redditur ſed ablatæ juſtitiæ ſenſus. Coc:

Hence obſerve.

First, *A juſtified perſon is a righteous perſon.*

He hath a clothing of righteouſneſs; that which we call *his righteouſneſs*, is not properly but imputedly his. It is not a cloathing of his owne making, but made for him and beſtowed freely upon

upon him. (*Rom:* 10. 3.) *They being ignorant of the righteouſneſs of God, and going about to eſtabliſh their owne righteouſneſs, have not ſubmitted themſelves to the righteouſneſs of God.* It is Gods righteouſneſs not our owne, and yet it is our owne as well as the righteouſneſs of God, it being imputed and reckoned unto us for our righteouſneſs; it is the believers righteouſneſs as given to him, it is Chriſts righteouſneſs as wrought by him.

Secondly, Obſerve.

A juſtified perſon under great afflictions and temptations often looſeth the comfortable ſight and ſence of his owne righteouſneſs.

And ſo may look upon himſelfe as an unrighteous perſon, as having no righteouſnes, or as being unreconciled & unjuſtified. For, as many bold ſinners & hypocrites preſume they have a righteouſneſs when they have none, and boaſt themſelves to be in the number of the juſtified when they are not. So many an afflicted and tempted ſoule, who is indeed juſtified in the ſight of God, may be unjuſtified in his owne. Great afflictions have an appearance of divine diſpleaſure, which ſtands moſt oppoſite to juſtification. As affliction is a kinde of darkneſs, ſo it often leaves the ſoule in much darkneſs. And he that is in the dark is full of feare, he is apt to queſtion his ſtate, whether he hath any thing of God in him or no. For though it be not good for a Chriſtian alwayes to begin to live, he ſhould come to a poynt, and labour for a certainty; yet ſome are brought to ſuch a paſs that their former evidences and experiences are even dead and lye proſtrate, and they conſtrained to begin a new reckoning about their ſpirituall eſtate, or, as it were, to begin againe to live.

Thirdly, Note.

Mans righteouſneſs or juſtification, is as loſt to him when he wants the evidence, that is, the comfort, ſweetneſs, and peace of it.

When his ſoul-ſtate is ſo ravel'd and intangled, that he can make nothing of it, then his righteouſneſs is as loſt. *Thoſe things which appeare not, are to us as if they were not. Not to know what we have, is a degree of not having.* When grace doth not act or is not uſed, we are ſayd in Scripture to lack grace, or to have none. (*2 Pet: 1. 9.*) *But he that lacketh theſe things is blind, and cannot*

not ſee afar off. The whole context carrieth it of believers, who are in a ſtate of grace, who yet not uſing grace are ſayd to lack it, and are called blinde, as not able to ſee afar off, how it was with them when the work of converſion firſt began, & ſo have upon the matter forgotten that they were ever purged from their old ſins. That is, they act as a man that hath never had any acquaintance with God, or knew ſo much as the meaning *of repentance from dead workes.* He, in the Goſpel, who had but one talent and did not uſe it, is ſayd to have none, *From him that hath not ſhall be taken away even that he hath* (Math: 25. 29.) 'Tis a ſtrange expreſſion to ſay, that ſhall be taken away from a man which he hath not; yet the idle ſervant is ſayd not to have that one talent which he had, becauſe he did not uſe it, but layd it by as a dead ſtocke. Now, as in reference unto the grace of ſanctification in us, when we doe not act, we are ſayd to lack it, or not to have it, ſo in reference to the peace of juſtification, when we have not the comfort of it, we are ſayd to be without it. And therefore when peace is reſtored to the ſoule, righteouſneſs or juſtification is reſtored alſo.

Further, from the connexion of theſe words, *He ſhall ſee his face with joy.*; *for he will render unto man his righteouſneſs.*

Note, Fourthly.

When the ſight of our righteouſneſs or juſtified ſtate in Chriſt returnes to us, our comforts returne.

We may be juſtified or in a juſtified ſtate, and not rejoyce. But if we know we are in a ſtate of juſtification, we cannot but rejoyce. It will make a man rejoyce to purpoſe, when he ſeeth the righteouſneſs of juſtification is clearely his (*Iſa:* 45. 25.) *Surely ſhall one ſay in the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength: One ſhall ſay this:* He ſhall not only have righteouſneſs in the Lord, but he ſhall ſay he hath; that is, he ſhall be able to make it out; he ſhall have the light of it upon his ſpirit, and then as it followeth in the Prophet; *In him ſhall all the ſeed of Iſrael be juſtified and ſhall glory.* When they are able to ſay this, then they ſhall not only rejoyce but glory. Glorying is the height of joy, or joy is in its full ſtrength. The Apoſtle ſaith (*Rom:* 14. 17.) *The kingdome of God is not meat and drink* (What is it then?) *but righteouſneſs* (and what elſe?) *peace and joy in the holy Ghoſt.*

Righte-

Righteouſneſs brings in peace, that's the firſt fruit; The warre is ended, the controverſie determined between God and the ſoule, and when once peace is entred, joy will follow. It is uſuall to make triumphs, when, a formerly broken, peace is made between two nations. When *Abimilech* ſent commiſſioners to make a covenant of peace with *Iſaac*, the holy Story ſaith (*Gen:* 26. 30.) *He made them a feaſt, and they did eate and drinke.* Surely when God ſends his holy Spirit to ſpeake peace to a troubled ſoule (againſt *whom his terrors have been ſet in array* (as *Job* ſayd in his own caſe, *Chap:* 6. 4.) *and the arrowes of the Almighty within him have drunke up his ſpirit.*) he (I ſay) having his peace thus reſtored to him, cannot but have the joy of the Lord reſtored to him, as *David* prayed his might (*Pſal:* 51. 12.) *Reſtore unto me the joy of thy ſalvation*; That is, ſhew me that I am juſtified, that my ſin is pardoned; this will bring back into my boſome the joy of thy ſalvation, and my drooping ſoul ſhall be not only refreſhed but feaſted as with marrow and fatneſs. Joy is a certaine conſequent upon the ſight of our juſtification; Yea joy is not only a conſequent, but a fruit and effect of it; joy floweth out of the nature of it; nor is it ever interrupted or ſuſpended, but upon the hiding of righteouſneſs out of our ſight. And therefore joy returnes unfayleably when the Lord is pleaſed thus *to render unto man his righteouſneſs.*

JOB. Chap. 33. Vers. 27, 28, 29, 30.

He looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profiteth me not:
He will deliver his soule from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light.
Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man,
To bring back his soule from the pit, and to be enlightned with the light of the living.

WE had the blessed issue of the Lords dealing with the sick sinner in the former verse. Now, in the two first verses of this context, we have the same case and issue put in generall with reference to any man. And in the two latter, *Elihu* recapitulates or summes up the whole matter, and then applyeth it to *Job* personally and particularly in the three last verses of the Chapter.

He looketh upon men, &c.

שור a radice שור inspexit, intentis et fixis oculis intuitus est.

The word notes a strict beholding and fixing both of the outward and inward eye, that of the mind, with that of the body. Tis here, after the manner of men, attributed to God; He marks and animadverts upon men, how it is with them, or how they stand disposed and affected.

Yet there is a difference among interpreters, who is the antecedent to the word *He*. *He looketh upon men*. The doubt or question is to whom this relative pronowne, He hath respect; whether to God or to the sick man lately spoken of.

Qui hoc modo afflictus fuit, resipiscens intuetur homines et diciter. Dras.

Some understand it chiefly of the sick man recovered. *He looketh upon men*; That is, the sick man looketh upon those about him; and saith, *I have sinned and perverted that which is right*. As if being raised from his sick bed, he should raise himselfe up, to give glory to God by confessing and acknowledging before men, that he had sinned in perverting the rule of righteousness given him to walke by, and had found by dear-bought experience, that *it profited him not*. The Italian translater saith, *He afterwards shall*

shall turne himselfe towards man, and say, &c. That is, he shall preach Gods grace to sinfull man, and propose himselfe an example of it, magnifying the grace of God to him, and acknowledging his owne vileness. They who insist upon this exposition render the 28th verse, as the continued speech of the sick man, making it out to this effect, *I have sinned and perverted that which was right, yet he hath delivered, or will deliver my soule from going into the pit, and my life shall see the light.*

Fructum alium misericordiæ domini in afflictum subjungit, quod ille liberatus, et culpam suam coram cæteris hominibus agnoscet et dei misericordiam in se confitebitur ut alios ædificet, &c. Merc.

It must be granted, that to look upon or behold man, is in Scripture, a descriptive periphrasis or circumlocution, expressing a man recovered from some dangerous & deadly sickness. And therefore when *Hezekiah* thought his sickness was to death, and his case desperate; He thus bemoaned himselfe (*Isa:* 38.11.) *I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living; I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world*. But, saith *Elihu*, the sick man being perfectly recovered, talkes with and looks upon men; And the first discourse he usueth, is a confession of repentance for his iniquity; *I have sinned, I have perverted that which was right, and it profiteth not*: And his next is a confession of praise for his recovery; *He hath delivered*, or I am assured *he will deliver my soule from going downe to the pit, and my life shall see the light*. This is a profitable exposition; and much insisted upon by some very learned interpreters, and therefore I shall make a little improvement of it by this briefe observation.

It is our duty, being recovered from sickness, to confess and make knowne the goodness of God and our sinfulness to those that are about us.

There is a three-fold confession; First, of faith, that we believe what God hath revealed and promised to doe for us. Secondly, of prayse, that we thankfully acknowledge what God hath done for us according to his promise. Thirdly, of repentance, that we are heartily sorrowfull for and bewayle, what we have done against the command of God. We should be ashamed to sin before men, but let us not be ashamed to confesse our sinfullness, and (in some cases) our speciall sins before men. Though we neither impose nor extort particular confessions from men (as the Papists doe) yet it is good for men who have been under the afflicting hand of God, and have had great experience of his mercy in raising them up,

up, to declare what God hath done both for soule and body, that others may be bettered by their experiences.

But I shall not stay upon this, because our translation (which is, cleare and safe) runs another way, making the antecedent to this *he*, to be God; *He*, that is, God *looketh upon men, and saith, If any say, I have sinned, and have perverted that which is right, and it profited me not*; Then (as it followeth) *He will deliver him from going downe to the pit, and his life shall see the light.* The sence of the context in Generall, is plaine; *God looketh upon men; and if he seeth them penitent, he will have mercy upon them, and deliver them, or give them that which is better then bodily deliverance.* More distinctly.

He looketh upon men.

It is the work of God at all times to look upon men; and he looketh so upon all men, as if he had but one man to look upon. His look upon men is not a bare look, but a considering, and an observing look. He so looks upon men, that he looks through them. He looks upon them, and takes notice what they are, how it is with them, what they are doing, and at what they are driving. He looks upon them to consider both the frame of their hearts, and the course of their lives; yea his looking is an expecting: he so looketh upon man, as looking for somewhat from man, or as desiring to see somewhat in him. Though God hath no need of us, nor of any thing we can doe, yet he looketh, waiteth, or hath an expectation, of somewhat to be done by us. He looketh upon sick men, to see how they take it; with what patience they beare affliction, what the workings of their hearts are, what their repentings, what the actings of their faith; such things as these the Lord looketh for from most men, mostly from men under the rod, under sad & sorrowfull dispensations. And the words following shew what it is expressely which the Lord looketh for. Yet before I open them, note in generall.

God loves to see occasion of doing good to man.

What we love to doe, we love the opportunities of doing it. The Lord is good, and he loveth to doe good, and therefore he is expressed as one troubled when he wants, & as one pleased when he hath the occasions of doing it. We may take up that sence eminently from that most patheticall wish (*Psal.* 81.13,14,15,16.) *O that my people had hearkned unto me, and Israel had walked in my wayes, I should soone have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries. The haters of the Lord, should have submitted themselves, but their time should have endured for ever: I should have fed them also with the finest of the wheate,* &c. As if the Lord had sayd, How glad should I have been if my people had been but fitly qualified to give me occasion of removing all evill from them, and of doing them all manner of good. The holy Prophet speakes the heart of God in the same readiness (*Isa.* 30. 18.) *Therefore will the Lord wait that he may be gracious unto you, therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you.* As if he had sayd, The Lord expects your reformation, that he may not proceed in rigour against you, or as some conceive rather, he only delayeth his putting an end to your troubles, till ye are humbled, expecting a seasonable time to shew you that mercy, in bestowing of which he will exalt and advance his owne name and honour, when once he seeth you fitted and duely prepared to receive it. *The Lord* (saith *David*, Psal. 14. 2.) *looked downe from heaven upon all the children of men, to see if there were any did understand and seek God.* There he is represented looking downe from heaven to see if any did understand, as here, *he looketh upon men* to see if any doe repent, *saying, I have sinned*, &c. The Lord often, yea alwayes looketh downe upon Nations, Cities and people, to see if any have a right understanding of him, or a will with upright affections to him. The Lord at this day is looing upon the sick, and looking upon the sound, to see if there are any, who are going on faithfully in a right way, or repenting that they have gone wrong. *He looketh upon men; And if any say,*

I have sinned, &c.

In this latter part of the verse, we have the matter expressed which the Lord looketh upon men for, 'tis repentance and godly sorrow for sin; *If any say, I have sinned*; That is, if any repent. When the Lord saith, *If any say, I have sinned*, he doth not meane it of a bare saying so; but, if any say so, laying his sin to heart; if any say so from a true sence of the evill of sin; if any say so burden'd with sin, and tasting the bitternesse of it; if any shall say, *I have sinned*, and say it thus, then &c. The word which we translate

slate *sinned*, notes a mistake of our ayme or way; As if it had been sayd; *If any man say*, I have gone besides the line, and done besides the rule. Sin is in all men a missing of the mark, and a stepping out of the right path; it is also in very many, as 'tis expressed in the next clause, *a perverting of that which is right. If any say, I have sinned,*

and perverted that which is right.

עוה *curvus obliquus contortus perversus.*
Latini dicunt curvos mores.

The word implyeth more then ordinary sinning, more then sins of infirmity, which arise from ignorance and mistake, even those which are committed with a resolvedness of spirit, and purpose of heart; or they imply not those sins which a man falls into unadvisedly and unawares, but those which he commits upon deliberation, and in the eye of the Law, that shewing him plainly what is right, and that he ought not to pervert it. So then in strictness of sence, *to pervert that which is right*, is to be willingly, yea wilfully unrighteous. The Church making a graduall confession of her sin by three steps, puts this word in the midst (*Psal:* 106. 6.) *We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity* ('tis this word) or done that which is *crooked and perverse*) *we have done wickedly. Cain*, the first man born, sinned thus (*Gen:* 4.13.) *My punishment is greater then I can beare* (so we render) or (as we put in the margin) *mine iniquity is greater then can be forgiven. Cains* sin was a perversness, he knew he perverted that which was right in slaying his brother. So that, here we have the confession of sin, with the aggravation of it, *a notorious sin*. The penitent person doth not only say, I have sinned, but I have sinned greatly, or I have *perverted that which was right*. To sin, and to pervert that which is right, are materially the same; only the latter intimates the manner how a sin is committed, namely, when we would not be ruled by the Law, but accommodate the Law (as if it were a leaden or lesbian rule) to serve our lusts; so perverting that which was right, that we might countenance and embolden our selves in doing wrong. If any aske

What is right? Surely, *right* is First, The Law, Secondly, that which is done according to Law. *The statutes of God are right, rejoycing the heart* (Psal: 19. 8.) The word of God is right, and the rule of right, yea it is a ruling right. To pervert that which is right, or to pervert the law of righteousness, is to act against the light

light and convictions of conscience which will be our Judge. One of the latine interpreters useth a harsh and course word to presse this by; yet full and proper to the scope; *I have tortified* (or writhed and bended) *that which was right*. Another renders it, *I have prevaricated from that which was right*. Our word gives the sence fully enough, *I have sinned, and perverted that which was right.*

Peccavi et rectum tortificavi. Cajet: *Prævaricatus sum à probitate.* Tygur:

Hence note.

First, *Sin must be confessed. The Lord looks for it. He looketh upon men to see whether any will say, I have sinned.*

He will have their sin out of their own mouths. When *Nathan* brought the parable home to *David* and sayd, *Thou art the man*, he presently fell into confession, *I have sinned* (2 Sam: 12.13.)

But some may say, Is this confession of sin sufficient to say, *I have sinned.*

I answer; First, a generall confession of sin, or that we have sinned is not sufficient, unlesse we are also willing and ready to confesse before the Lord all our particular sins. Some are ready enough to say, *they have sinned*, who yet will scarse be brought to acknowledge any particular sin; yea many say, they are great sinners, who know not how or in what they have sinned, nor what it is to sin. Therefore barely to say, *I have sinned*, is not a Gospel confession of sin. I answer. Secondly, Though a generall confession is only expressed in this and many other Scriptures, yet a speciall confession is intended. The prodigal Son (*Luke* 15. 19.) sayd, *I will returne to my father, and I will say to my father, I have sinned against heaven, and against thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son.* He did not enumerate the particular evill acts he had committed and was guilty of, yet doubtlesse he had them as a burden upon his heart, and was willing to unburden himselfe of them, one by one, in a hearty and heart-afflicting confession. The publican (*Luke* 18. 13.) *stood a far off, and durst not lift up his eyes to heaven, but only sayd, God be mercifull to me a sinner.* He struck at all his sins, though he did not by name touch any one of them. He that saith (knowing what he saith) *I have sinned*, will not hide any one of his sins; And he that indeed and truth confesseth any one, will cover none of his sins. Those sins may be pardoned which are not expressely confessed, but if we con-

Peccatores se esse pleriq; confitentur etiam qui se vel peccasse non credunt. Greg: l. 24. Moral: c: 12.

conceale or hide any ſin, and will not bring it forth in confeſſion, we cannot, in faith, expect the pardon of it.

Againe, Conſider the time or ſeaſon when the Lord looked for this confeſſion; It was a time of trouble and affliction, of paine and ſorrow, the man was ſick, or but in a way of recovery out of his ſickneſs.

Hence note.

Times of affliction are ſpeciall times of confeſſion and repentance.

Confeſſion of ſin muſt not be omitted (eſpecially not neglected) in our moſt comfortable dayes, much leſſe in a day of trouble. A ſad and troubled ſtate calls us aloud to a gracious ſadneſs of heart, to the ſearch of our hearts and lives, which are preparatory to repentance and Godly ſorrow. Uſually in proſperity men will not be at leiſure to ſearch their hearts, and take notice of their ſins. Therefore the Lord draweth them to confeſſion by drawing them from the world, by laying them upon their ſick beds, or by bringing them into ſtraites. And as when affliction is upon perſons or families, then is a ſpeciall time to confeſſe perſonall and family ſins; ſo to confeſſe national ſins, is moſt ſeaſonable when affliction hath ſeized upon kingdomes and nations. The want and neglect of that publicke confeſſion and ſorrow in ſuch a day is mightily aggravated, and moſt ſeverely threatned (*Iſa:* 22. 12, 13, 14.) God looketh and loveth to heare every man, ſaying, and a whole nation, as one man, ſaying in a day of ſorrow and trouble, *I have ſinned, and perverted that which was right.*

From the latter words, *I have perverted that which was right*, or *the Law.*

Note, Firſt.

The law of God is the rule of righteouſneſs; a right rule.

All rightneſs and righteouſneſs is comprehended in it, *and meaſured by it.*

Secondly, Learne.

Sin is a perverting of that which is right.

Every (the leaſt) ſin is ſo in ſome degree, though here, poſſibly, ſins are intended of any, even of the higheſt degree. The Apoſtle

Apoſtle defining ſin, calleth it (1 *John* 3. 4.) *A tranſgreſſion of the Law*; and if ſo, it muſt needs be a perverting of that which is right: For what is or can be right, if the rule of righteouſneſs be not. What the Apoſtle ſpake to *Elymas* (Acts 13. 10.) *Wilt thou not ceaſe to pervert the right wayes of the Lord*, ſhewes the nature and effect of every ſin, and the more ſinfull any ſin is, by ſo much the more doth it pervert that which is right. Some ſinners are ſayd to make voyd the law of God, to pervert it, as if they would quite ſubvert and diſanull it. *David* remembers God of ſuch, and deſires him to look to them betimes (*Pſal:* 119. 126.) *It is time for thee to work, for they have made voyd thy law*; That is, they have done their beſt, or worſt rather, their utmoſt to make it voyd, and of no force; 'Tis not in the power of all the powers of the world, to vacat reſcind or null one tittle of the law of God, heaven and earth ſhall paſſe away before that, yet many attempt it, yea ſome doe that which will be found and interpreted a making voyd of the law of God; who thinke themſelves great zelotes for, or very zealous of the law. That will be the caſe of many, eſpecially, of all will-worſhippers.

Againe, Conſider though the perſon here ſpoken of had not only ſinned, but perverted that which was right, that is, ſinned perverſly, yet upon confeſſion the Lord deales graciouſly with him.

Hence Note.

The free grace of God extends to the pardon of the greateſt ſins, even ſins of perverſneſs.

Where ſin aboundeth, Grace aboundeth much more (*Rom:* 5. 20.) whether the abounding of ſin be taken in the number of it, or in the weight of it, that is, in the greatneſs and aggravations of it, Grace hath its ſutable ſuper-abounding. (*Num:* 23. 21.) When *Balaam* would ſhew that the people of *Iſrael* were a people impenetrable by his curſes, he ſaith, *The Lord hath ſeen no iniquity in Jacob, nor perverſneſs in Iſrael.* The word there uſed is of a different root from this in the text, but the ſence is the ſame, implying, if the Lord had ſeen *perverſneſs* in *Iſrael*, it would have layd them open to a curſe; yet ſins made up of perverſneſs are within the compaſs of a pardon. There is no ſin excepted from pardon, but that which at once refuſeth and deſpiſeth it, the ſin againſt

עמל

the holy Ghost (*Math:* 12. 31.) This should not incourage any to sin perversly, only it is a comfort to those who have. They who have sinned perversly, or who have perverseness mingled with their sin, should not cast off the hope of pardon, but woe to those who sin perversly, (that is, against the light of their owne consciences) upon hopes of pardon. Such persons have no true hope (they may have much presumption) that they shall be pardoned. They who having sinned perversly, confesse it, have good ground to pray for pardon, but they who goe on sinning perversly, have no ground (while they doe so) to hope for it. This text speakes of a person confessing and bewayling that he hath sinned perverselv, not of a person purposing to sin so, as appeares further in the last clause of the verse; *If any say, I have sinned and perverted that which is right.*

And it profiteth me not.

Here's another poynt of confession, we must not only confesse that we have sinned, but the fruitlesnes of sin, or that sin *profiteth not*. There are two rendrings, and so two severall expositions of these words.

שׁוה *potest esse verbum, potest esse et nomen fœminium. Unde sensum est, non accepi tantundem, non reposita est mihi par pœna pro peccato meo.* Coc: *Non digne in me inquisivit pro his quæ peccavi.* Sept:

The word signifieth most properly that which is *equall*; And hence some give the sence thus, (which carrieth in it an eminent work of repentance) *I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and have not that which is equall*; That is, *Though I am greatly afflicted, and my sorrows lye heavie upon me, yet they are not equall to my sinning, or perverse dealings with the Lord. I have not received as I was worthy, or according to my ill deservings.* The Septuagint speak thus; *God hath not made a strict inquisition for my sin.* My iniquity is not charged upon me to the utmost. I have sinned grievously, but God hath dealt graciously with me, and hath not measured out to the full of mine iniquity. 'Tis an argument of true repentance to justifie God in afflicting us. This is a pious and a profitable rendring of the text.

Whence observe.

Firſt, *The punishment of sin in this life is not equall to sin.*

As all the sufferings of this life are not worthy to be compared with the glory of the next life (*Rom:* 1. 18.) so neither are they comparable with the sins of this life. When a man is under very

very sore affliction, *chastened with paine upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong paine: So that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat*; yet he must confesse, his sufferings are lesse then his sin. The Church of the Jewes acknowledged this as to that great affliction, their captivity in *Babylon* (*Ezra* 9. 13.) *After all that is come upon us for our evill deeds, and for our great trespasse, seeing that our God hath punished us lesse then our iniquities deserve*, &c. It was no little punishment which that people endured, yet they confessed it was lesse then their iniquity. The least sin is so great, that no punishment which man is capable of in this life can equall it; nor can that in the life to come equall it as to present degree, but only by the everlastingnes of its duration.

Secondly, Note.

A soule truly humbled is ready to confess to the glory of God, that his punishment and suffering is less then his sin.

As a godly man doth not thinke any sin little, so he doth not thinke any affliction great compared with his sin. *Cain* sayd, *My punishment is greater then I can beare*; but he did not say, it was greater then his sin. How hot soever the furnace of divine wrath is heated, yet sinners must acknowledge there is sparing mercy in it; and that God might have made it seven times hotter, and therefore hath afflicted them lesse then their sin. As a godly man is ready to acknowledge his mercy more then he hath deserved (*Gen:* 32. 10.) *I* (sayd *Jacob*) *am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and all the truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servant*, as if he had sayd; I am lesse in my good actings then any of thy actings towards me for good have been) so he is ready to say, his greatest afflictions or evills which he suffereth are lesse then his sins, or then the evills which he hath done.

Secondly, The word signifieth *to profit*, so we translate; *And it profiteth me not.* Other Scriptures comply with this sence (*Hester* 3. 8.) *Haman* in his malicious and envious suggestions against the Jews, tells the King, *It is not for the Kings profit to suffer them to continue.* He useth the same word againe (*Hest:* 5. 13.) where after he had reported all the great things that he enjoyed, he concludes; *What doth all this profit me? or all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the Kings gate?*

Verbum שׁוה *expono, prosuit non fuit mihi conducibile quod peccaram.* Mercer.

Thus

Thus here, saith the sick man, *I have sinned, And it profited me not, or I have got nothing by it*: And when he saith, *it profited me not*; we are to expound it by a usuall figure in Scripture, whereby more is intended then is expressed, so that, *it profiteth me not*, is, *it had been very detrimentall, dangerous, and deadly to me.* I feel and smart under the sad issues of my sin, my perverting that which was right hath done me (though I have had but my right) much wrong. *I have sinned, and it profited me not.*

Hence note.

First, *Sin pretends profit and advantage to a sinner.*

There is no temptation comes without a bait. Though some sin purely for sins sake; yet it is rare that sin cometh without the offer of a bribe, and profit is one of the greatest both baits and bribes that the Devill puts upon the hook of temptation, when he fisheth for soules. *You shall get by it*, saith that deceiver. But the repenting soule, can truly say, *it profited me not*; I had thought to have gotten by my sin, it promised me very faire, but I have got nothing but blows. The temptation with which the Devill assaulted our first parents was of this kinde, He told the woman of profit, she and her husband should gaine knowledge by it, (that's a noble gaine) *They should be as Gods knowing good and evill*, there's all profit imaginable in such a knowledge. Christ himselfe who was God and perfectly knew good and evill, was also tempted with profit (*Math*: 4. 8, 9.) *The devill shewed him all the kingdomes of the world* (and those not with bare walls, but ready hung and furnished) *and the glory of them, and sayd unto him, all these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall downe and worship me.* If our head and the heire of all things was tempted with profit, how much more poor we! No marvaile if Satan provide him Agents to say to us as they are represented (*Pro*: 1. 13.) *Come, cast in your lot among us, we will all have one purse*, or a joynt stock in this wicked trade; What they hoped to get by it, is told us in the next words; *We shall find all precious substance, and fill our houses with spoyle.* We shall get enough, and you shall share with us if you will but come and goe with us. We see what sin promiseth; But what doth the sinner find? himselfe answers, *It profited me not.*

Hence

Hence learne.

There is nothing gotten by sin, no good is gotten by it.

The Apostle puts the question to sinners (*Rom*: 6. 21.) *What fruit had ye then, in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?* Cast up your account, and tell us what you find at the foot of it. Possibly some may say, we have gotten hundreds and thousands, we have gotten houses and lands, our barnes are full of corne, our fields of cattel, and our bags are full of treasure. But is it profit to have house and land, gold and silver come in by sin? Let that Scripture answer (*Math*: 16. 26.) *What is a man profited if he shall gaine the whole world and loose his own soule?* But some may say, they that are in Christ cannot loose their soules by sin. I answer; First, though they that are in Christ cannot be such sinfull soules, as to sin away their soules, though they cannot sin at such a rate, nor in such a height as to loose their soules who have indeed found Christ, or rather who are found of him, and planted in him; yet the dammage which every sin unrepented of and unpardoned puts man to is the losse of his soule. Secondly, suppose a sinner repenteth, what hath he got by sin, but the sorrows of repentance. And though no man shall have cause to repent of true repentance for sin, yet no man shall have cause to boast of the penny-worth he hath had by sin which hath occasion'd the sorrows of that repentance. One houres communion with God in wayes of holinesse is better then all the profits and pleasures which any man hath got while he was committing that sin, or running any course of sin, whereof he now repenteth. At the best sin dishonours God, troubles our consciences, and breakes our peace; at the best nothing is got by sin which is worth the having, at worst the soule is lost by it, which of all things we have is most worth the having.

Thirdly, Note.

Sin is exceeding dangerous and destructive to man.

Some would sin for the pleasures and carnal contentments which are found in sin, though they knew they should make no earnings, or get no profit by it, yea though they knew they should be and dye beggers by it. Once more, if this were all, that they should loose heaven by it, or if the meaning of loosing their soules

were

were only this, that their soules should be no more, they would easily venture it. But there is an affirmative in the negative, and when, 'tis sayd, *sin profiteth not*, the meaning is, it brings trouble and renders us miserable for ever; *Fooles* (that is, all sinfull men, saith the Spirit of God, *Psal:* 107. 17.) *because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities are afflicted*; and all such among these fooles, as dye in their sin are damned; and who is able to summe up the dammage of damnation?

Fourthly, Learne.

Sinners shall be forced at last to confesse that there is no profit in sin.

True penitents confesse it willingly now; and impenitents shall confesse it at last, whether they will or no; they shall have such a conviction of the evill of sin by their sufferings, as will make them say, what hath pride profited me? and what hath envy profited me? what hath malice and wrath profited me? And what hath the fraudulent deceiving of my neighbour profited me? this will be the cry of sinners to all eternity. Oh what hath sin profited us? That which is the willing confession of a gracious repentant here, will be the forced confession of damned impenitents for ever hereafter. This will be a bitter repentance. Hell is and will be full of the words of repentance, but no fruit of repentance shall be found there. The damned shall not find either amendment in themselves, or mercy from God. This will be the confession of all sinners at last (as of those that repent and are saved, so of those who repent when damned) we have sinned and perverted that which was right, and it hath not profited us. And when once man hath made this hearty confession to God of his sin and folly, then God maketh him a gracious promise of deliverance and mercy, as appeares in the tenour of the next verse.

Vers. 28. *He will deliver his soule from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light.*

There is a two-fold reading of this 28th verse, as was shewed in opening the former. For whereas that 27th verse is understood by some as the humble confession of the sick man recovered, and so read in this forme; *He looketh upon men and saith, I have sinned and*

and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not; then, this 28th verse is rendred to make up that sence, as a thankfull acknowledgement of his recovery, *He hath delivered my soule from going into the pit, and my life seeth the light.* Thus, as we had his confession of repentance in the verse fore-going, *I have sinned*, &c. so here we have his confession of praise and thankfulness; *He hath delivered my soule from going into the pit.* Mr *Broughton* translates to this sence; *He saved my soule from going into the pit, that my life doth see the light.* Thus the sick man being restored breakes out into thanksgiving; *The Lord in mercy hath freed me from death, hell, and the grave; I need not feare Satans accusations; my body enjoyes the light of the world, and my soule the light of Gods countenance shining upon me, which is better then life.* But because our owne reading is cleare in the originall text, and holds out the scope of the context fully enough, therefore I shall prosecute that only.

Juxta hanc lectionem erit etiamnũ hic versus ex cõfessione restituti ægri dei in se summam beneficentiam agnoscentis. Merc:

He will deliver his soule from going into the pit.

The words are an assertion of the favour and goodnesse of God to the penitent sick man; *He* (that is, God) *looketh upon men, and if he heare any saying, I have sinned and perverted that which is right, and it profiteth me not*, if he make such an humble and gracious confession, this will be the issue; the Lord *will deliver his soule from going into the pit.* At the 18th verse, we had words of the same import; *He keepeth back his soule from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword.* And againe, at the 24th verse, *Deliver him from going downe to the pit.* To be delivered from the pit (as was there shewed) is to be delivered from death. And the word *soule* (as was then likewise expounded) is put for the person; As if it were sayd; He will deliver him, the penitent man from death; and that both from temporall death, the death of the body, and from eternall death, the destruction of body and soule; or he will deliver him first from the pit of the grave; and secondly, from the pit of hell. *He will deliver his soule from the pit.*

And his life shall see the light.

Videre lucem periphrasis est vitæ; sicut è contrario tenebræ sunt symbolum mortis.

That is, he shall live to see the light; *To see the light*, is a circumlocution of life; As if it had been sayd, He shall recover out of his deadly sickness, and behold the light of the Sun, as living men

men doe. Thus *David* prayed (*Psal:* 56. 13.) *That he might walke before God in the light of the living.* And thus the wicked man is threatned with eternall death (*Psal:* 49. 19.) *He shall goe to the generation of his fathers, they shall never see light*; That is, they shall never enjoy life, but be shut up in a perpetuall night of death, or in the night of perpetuall death.

Secondly, When 'tis sayd, *his life shall see the light*, we may understand it, not only for a bare returne to life, or that he shall live, but that he shall live comfortably and prosperously, he shall lead a happy life. *To see the light*, is to live and rejoyce; light is pleasant, it is comfortable to behold the Sun, as *Solomon* speakes. To see light, comprehends all the comforts of this life, and of that to come, which is called, *the inheritance of the Saints in light*, (*Col:* 1. 12.) For as darkness is put not only for death, but for all the troubles of this life, and the torments of the next; so light is put both for life, and for all the comforts of this and the next life. All the blessings of this temporall life, and the perfect blessednes of eternall life, are comprehended in light. So that when 'tis sayd, *his life shall see the light*, the sence riseth thus high; *He shall be happy forever*; so extensive is the favour of God to repenting persons, that time is too narrow for it; everlasting light shall be their portion. From the former branch of the words thus opened, *He will deliver him from the pit.*

Observe.

All our deliverances are of God.

As there is none can deliver like God, so none can deliver but God. If he gives out the word that such a man shall goe to the pit, it is not in the power and skill of all the Princes and Physitians in the world, to save or stay him from it. And how low and desperate soever any mans condition is, if God say the word, he is deliver'd and reprieved from going downe into the pit.

Secondly, From the connexion with the former verse, the sick man having made this confession, *I have sinned and perverted that which is right, and it profiteth me not*, the Lord presently delivers him, &c.

Observe.

God is ready to deliver, humble praying and believing sinners.

That

That command hath a promise joyned to it (*Psal:* 50. 15.) *Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver.* The 107th Psalme speakes this quite through, where we find many sorts of perishing persons, crying unto God, and God delivering them from perishing when they cryed. As when sin cryeth God will afflict, so when sinners cry, God will relieve them in or bring them out of their affliction.

From the latter branch, *His life shall see the light.*

Note.

Naturall life, and light are a great blessing.

God promiseth much when he promiseth life and light; The light of this life is no small mercy, how much greater is the light of spirituall life? But who can conceive how great a mercy the light of eternall life is! yet all this God speakes to the humble and believing sinner, when he saith, *His life shall see the light.*

Secondly, Comparing the two parts of this text together, *He will deliver him from going downe to the pit, and his life shall see the light.*

Observe.

The mercy of God to humble sinners, is a compleate mercy.

Here is not only deliverance from evill, but the bestowing of good; it is much to be kept from going downe into the pit, but it is more to see light, the light of comfort here, and the light of glory hereafter. The mercy of God to his people is great in temporalls, greater in spiritualls, greatest in eternalls. The benefit of redemption (to shew the fullnes of it) is set forth two wayes; First, by our freedome from evill; Secondly, by our enjoyment of good. (*John* 3. 16.) *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. He shall not perish* (that is, he shall be delivered from going downe to the pit) *he shall have everlasting life*; that is (as the text speakes) *his life shall see the light.*

Elihu having at large drawne a description or narration of the whole proceeding of God with sinfull man in all the parts and particulars of it, gives a briefe of all that he sayd, in the two next verses.

Verſ. 29. *Lo all theſe things worketh God oftentimes with man;*

Verſ. 30. *To bring back his ſoule from the pit, to be enlightned with the light of the living.*

As the Apoſtle after he had diſcourſed at large, about the dignity of Chriſts Prieſt-hood, gathers up all together (*Heb:* 8. 1.) *Now of the things which we have ſpoken, this is the ſum: we have ſuch an high Prieſt, who is ſet on the right hand of the throne of the Majeſty in the heavens:* So *Elihu* having ſpoken much of the ſeverall wayes, by which God revealeth himſelfe to man, and works him to a ſight of his ſin, and penitentiall ſorrow for it, recollects and ſummes up all in theſe words.

Lo all theſe things worketh God oftentimes with man, &c.

In theſe two verſes, we may take notice, chiefly of two things.

Firſt, The frequency of Gods dealing thus with man (*v.*29th *Lo all theſe things worketh God oftentimes.*

Secondly, The deſigne and purpoſe of God in doing ſo; *That he may bring back his ſoule from the pit, and be enlightned with the light of the living.*

Lo, all this worketh God oftentimes with man.

Here's the application of the former Doctrine; *Elihu* preſſeth his hearers with it, and bids them lay it to heart; As if he had ſayd, *I have not been ſpeaking of things in the clouds, but of what is really and dayly acted among the children of men. Lo* (or behold) *all theſe things.* There are foure ſpeciall ſignifications in Scripture of this word, *Lo*, or *behold*, and they may all foure meete in this place.

Firſt, It imports ſome new unheard-of and wonderfull thing (*Iſa:* 7. 14.) *Lo, or behold a virgin ſhall conceive, and bear a ſon:* That a virgin ſhould bring forth a ſon, is a wonder of wonders, a wonder ſo much above the courſe and power of Nature, ſo much beyond the compaſſe & comprehenſion of reaſon, that men and Angels have reaſon to be aſtoniſhed at it.

Secondly, 'Tis prefixed, to ſhew ſome extraordinary impulſe or readineſſe of ſpirit for action. Thus Chriſt ſpeaketh in that other

other noble prophecy of him (*Pſal:* 40. 7.) *Then ſaid I, Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me; I delight to doe thy will O my God: yea thy Law is within my heart. Lo, I come,* that is, I am ready to come, I am preſt upon the work, I am under the preſſure and command of my own ſpirit, as well as under thy appoyntment and decree to undertake and finiſh that worke of mans redemption.

Thirdly, It frequently implyeth matter worthy of weight and deepeſt conſideration. That's uſefull and remarkeable which is thus prefaced. Thus *Solomon* ſpeaking of the field of the ſlothfull man, ſaith (*Prov:* 24. 31.) *Lo, it was all growne over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the ſtone wall thereof was broken downe:* As if he had ſayd, Marke, this is a thing to be attended, the ſluggards field is full of thorns; that is, in a ſpirituall ſence, *ſlothfull hearts are full of luſts and vanities.* In this language the Church invites all to conſider the Glorious excellencies of God (*Iſa:* 29. 9.) *Lo, this is our God.* And thus Chriſt ſpeakes of the woman whom he had healed on the Sabbath day (*Luke* 13. 16.) *And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, theſe eighteene yeares, be looſed from her infirmity on the Sabbath day?* As if he had ſayd, Pray conſider the caſe and ſpeake your mindes.

Fourthly, 'Tis often uſed in a way of ſtrong aſſertion, and affirmation, intimating the certainty of what is ſpoken (*Gen:* 1. 29.) *And God ſaid, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing ſeed.* And againe (*Gen:* 12. 11.) *It came to paſſe, when he was come neere to enter into Egypt, that he ſaid unto Sarah his wife, Behold, now, I know that thou art a faire woman to look upon.* (Read *Pſal.* 132. 6. *Ezek:* 30. 9. *Luke* 1. 32.)

In the preſent text it may have all theſe intendments; for is it not a wonderfull thing, that God ſhould be gracious to poore creatures? is it not ſtrange that he ſhould take ſo much paines with, and exerciſe ſo much patience towards them? Secondly, *Lo, God worketh all theſe things*; He is ready to doe them, he waiteth to be gracious, or to magnifie his grace in doing them. Thirdly, *Lo, God worketh all theſe things*; is not this a matter of great conſideration, ought we not to ſit downe and weigh it well? Fourthly, *Lo, all theſe things worketh God*; certainly God hath and will work all theſe things; this is a truth out of all queſtion, a truth of which

which there is no doubt to be made. As the Apoſtle ſaith (*1 Tim: 3. 16.*) *Without controverſie, great is the myſtery of Godlineſs, God was manifeſt in the fleſh*; So I may ſay without controverſie, great is this myſtery of Gods manifeſting himſelfe to frayle fleſh, and doing all theſe things here ſpoken of, awakening the conſciences of men by dreames, and working upon them by grievous ſickneſſes, ſending an interpreter one of a thouſand to declare unto man his uprightneſs, and at laſt delivering his ſoule from going downe into the pit. *Lo, all theſe things worketh God.*

עשה *operatus eſt egit, perfecit, uſurpatur etiam pro gubernatione rerum creatarum.*

There is ſomewhat peculiar in that expreſſion, *he worketh.* The native ſence of the word, implyeth; Firſt, a willing worke, not forced or conſtrained. Secondly, a full and compleat worke, not an eſſay or offer, not a worke begun only, but carried on to perfection. The wicked are called *workers of iniquity*, (Pſal: 5. 5.) becauſe they are free and ready to ſin, they have a ſtrong tyde and bent of ſpirit to doe evill, and they doe it not to halves but throughly; they doe not only begin or nibble at the baite a little (as a good man often doth) but greedily ſwallow it downe hooke and all; they are fully in it, and doe it fully, they make a worke of it, and ſo are *workers of iniquity*. The Lord doth good, as the wicked doe evill; *All theſe things worketh God*, He worketh them willingly, he worketh them compleatly, (*Iſa: 26.12.*) *Lord thou wilt ordaine peace for us, for thou alſo haſt wrought all our workes in us*; Thou art the Author and finiſher of them. We are invited (*Pſal: 46. 8.*) *to come and behold the workes of the Lord, what deſolations he hath made in the earth.* The building workes, and the deſolating workes of God, whether reſpecting perſons or nations, are perfect workes. *Lo, all theſe things worketh God.*

Hence note.

What ever good we ſee wrought among or for the children of men, God is the worker of it.

As he over-ruleth the evill which is done, and both ſendeth and ordereth the evill which is ſuffered; ſo he is the worker of all the good that is done. God worketh it all either immediately by himſelfe, or mediately by ſecond cauſes; and what inſtrument ſoever is ſet a worke, yet the worke as to the matter and manner of it, as alſo to the reſult and iſſue of it, is the Lords. He was the worker

worker of all that hath been ſpoken of in the former context; though we reade of a meſſenger, of an interpreter, yet the work was Gods. 'Tis ſayd (*Gen: 39. 22.*) *The keeper of the priſon committed to Joſephs hand, all the priſoners that were in the priſon, and whatſoever they did there, he was the doer of it.* Not that he did every thing with his own hand in the priſon, but he gave the rule, and ordered all that was done. Much more may I ſay of the Lord, whatſoever is done in the world, eſpecially among his people, *God is the doer of it*, All goes through his hand. *Lo, all theſe things worketh God.*

Further, From the prefix, *Lo.*

Obſerve.

The workes and dealings of God with men are wonderfull, thoſe eſpecially which he worketh for the humbling of a ſinner, and for the delivering of a ſoule from going downe to the pit.

The breaking of the heart, the rayſing of it by faith, the renewing of its peace and comfort, are wonderfull works of God. And the reaſon why we wonder no more at them, is, becauſe we conſider ſo little of them.

Hence againe from the word, *Lo.*

Note.

The workes of God are to be deeply conſidered, to be ſtayed upon.

We muſt not paſſe them by lightly, whether they be towards our ſelves or others, *God hath made his wonderfull workes to be remembred* (ſaith *David*, Pſal: 111. 4.) or *to be conſidered*, that's the deſigne of God in his works, he hath made them for that end, that they ſhould be remembred, and attended to, or they are ſuch as cannot but be remembred; they leave their markes and memorialls behind them. God ſets ſuch a ſtamp of his power, wiſdome, juſtice, and goodneſs upon his workes, that they will not be forgotten. And as his outward providential workes, are ſuch, ſo his ſpirituall workes are much more ſuch. The godly-wiſe underſtand them ſo, they have a criticall eye in diſcerning thoſe inviſible workes of God with a poore ſoule, in reducing him from ſin, and bringing him to himſelfe. *David* calleth all the godly to the conſideration of thoſe workes in his owne caſe (*Pſal: 66. 16.*) *Come and heare all ye that feare God, and I will declare what he*

he hath done for my ſoule. What God doth for our bodyes is very conſiderable, but what he hath done for our ſoules can never be enough conſidered nor admired. *Lo, all theſe things worketh God*

oftentimes with man.

פעמים שלש

The originall is, *twice, thrice*, ſo we put in the margin, and render it *often-times*, in the text. Some expound it, of thoſe three diſtinct wayes, in which God dealeth with man, before deſcribed. The Septuagint are expreſſe for that; *All theſe things worketh the ſtrong God three wayes with man*, Which the Scholiaſt exemplifies in the three wayes here noted by *Elihu*. Firſt, awakning him by dreames and viſions, Secondly, troubling him by ſickneſſes and afflictions; Thirdly, teaching him by Prophets and Interpreters. Yet, I conceive, the text doth not ſtrictly recapitulate thoſe three ſeverall wayes before ſpoken of, in theſe words, *twice, thrice*, but only ſhewes us that God uſeth all theſe wayes or any other, as his wiſdome ſhall thinke fit, many times, or oftentimes for the producing of thoſe bleſſed effects.

Ἰδὲ ταῦτα πάντα ἐργάται ὁ ἰσχυρὸς ὁδῷς τρὶς μετὰ ἀνδρός. Sept: δὶς καὶ τρὶς τῶν τρόπων. Schol.

Lo, all theſe things worketh God oftentimes with man.

Twice, thrice, is a double certain number, put for any ſingle uncertain number; And it only teacheth or aſſureth us, that God debateth with the ſons of men in all or any of theſe wayes often-times, or more then once. If they doe not anſwer his call or purpoſe (which they ſeldome doe) at the firſt; he calleth againe and againe, *twice* or *thrice*, or often-times, that is as often as he ſeeth it good, needfull or expedient to doe it. And we may ſuppoſe that *Elihu* uſeth this number *twice*, or *thrice*, in alluſion to the cuſtomes of men; whether civil Magiſtrates or Churches, who when they deale with others about any fault committed or offence given, they doe not take them at the very firſt default, but warne and admoniſh them twice or thrice, or ſend them (as the caſe may require) ſeverall Citations to appeare, and either to acknowledge their guilt, or acquit themſelves of it.

Theſe things worketh God twice or thrice.

Tribus vicibus, i.e. *multoties, ſed utitur numero ternario,*

And remember, it is but *twice* or *thrice*; which ſpeech though it may be well rendred (as we ſay) *oftentimes*, yet it is not *very often*; *twice* is no number, *twice* is the leaſt number, and *thrice* is but a ſmall

ſmall number, two or three witneſſes are the leaſt number of witneſſes that can be admitted in any buſineſs. That, the Lord will doe this, *twice or thrice* proves that he will doe it ſeverall times, men ſhall have meanes, and frequent meanes, but *twice or thrice*, may not be *very often*, much leſſe *always*, there is a ſtint, and a determinate number in the breaſt of God; and that we might not expect to have his parience lengthned out alwayes to us, 'tis put into the ſmalleſt numbers, *All theſe things worketh God twice or thrice,*

ut congruat humanæ conſuetudini, per quam ſolent homines ter moneri vel citari. Aquin:

with man.

The word by which man is here expreſſed, is, no ordinary word, 'tis that word by which ſignifieth the higheſt and greateſt of men, God deales thus not only with inferiour perſons, and mean men, but with great men, with men of note, with men of power and ſtrength; let men be as ſtrong, and ſtout, as they will, God can tame them, and bring them to his foote.

אבר *non quælibet virũ importat, ſed ut plurimum nobilem illuſtrem, vel aliqua ratione ſpectabilem.* Bold:

Further, when he ſaith, *Lo, all theſe things God worketh oftentimes with man.* This appellative *man*, may be taken two wayes.

First, Perſonally or individually, that is, he worketh thus oftentimes with the ſame man, God is put to renew his actings more then once with one and the ſame man, becauſe he will not bow nor obey at firſt.

Secondly, We may take this word *man* ſpecially as implying ſeverall men, or men of all ſorts, as well as any one man of a ſort. That manner of ſpeaking is frequent in the old Teſtament (*Job* 1. 4.) *And his ſons went and feaſted in their houſes, man his day*, or every one his day. So (*Jon:* 1. 7.) *And they ſayd, every one to his fellow*, or *man to his fellow*, ſo here God worketh theſe things oftentimes with man, that is, with ſeverall men, as ſeemeth good to him. The ſpeech is diſtributive. For though we are not to underſtand it ſo largely, as if God dealt thus with every particular man, yet he deales thus with many men, even with as many as himſelfe pleaſeth, or hath purpoſed. *Lo, All theſe things worketh God oftentimes with man.*

q.d. *unicuique hominum ſolet deus prædicta ſuæ voluntatis judicia manifeſtare, ut ſit oratio diſtributiva.* Bold:

Hence note.

☞ *Such is the goodneſs of God, that though man is not wrought upon preſently, or at the firſt, yet he will come a ſecond or a third*

time to carry his worke through with him.

'Tis a mercy that God will ſpeake once, or uſe any means once with us, 'tis mercy that he will ſpeake any one word in any one way, to bring us off from ſin; 'tis mercy that he will ſend one viſion, or one affliction, to awaken us out of our ſecurity, or one meſſenger to inſtruct us once in our duty; but when the Lord is pleaſed to uſe ſeverall meanes, and thoſe ſeverall meanes, ſeverall times, how doth the aboundant mercy and graciouſneſs of God appeare in this! And as the mercy of God in generall, ſo the patience of God in ſpeciall appeareth aboundantly in it. The Lord waites to be gracious, he waites the working of this or that means, of a ſecond and third meanes, and he waites the working of them all over againe and againe, or oftentimes; here is patience with long-ſufferance.

Secondly, Obſerve.

God will perfect his worke, and bring it to an iſſue with ſinfull man.

God would not give over working to humble *Job*, till he had fully humbled him; And this made *Job* almoſt amazed at Gods dealing with him (*Chap: 7. 17, 18, 19.*) *What is man that thou ſhouldeſt magnifie him? and that thou ſhouldeſt ſet thy heart upon him? And that thou ſhouldeſt viſit him every morning, and try him every moment.* *Job* ſeemed much troubled at this inſtancy of God with him, and therefore expoſtulated in the next words, *How long wilt thou not depart from me, nor let me alone till I ſwallow downe my ſpittle?* But, for all his crying, God would not depart from him, nor let him alone for a morning, no nor for a moment till he had finiſhed his worke and accompliſhed his will both in him and upon him; till he had brought his heart into a due frame and temper under his mighty hand. If once or twice will not doe it, he will doe it thrice; The Lord is not weary either of working or waiting; *God is a rocke* (ſaith *Moſes* Deut: 32.4.) *and his worke is perfect*; and of all his workes, that of grace is moſt perfect. His viſible providentiall works are perfect or ſhall be before he hath done with them, or put his laſt hand to them, but his inviſible ſpirituall workes are moſt perfect; as God worketh often to bring man out of the ſtate of ſin to grace; ſo he will not ceaſe working till grace be perfected, he will worke till that worke is wrought to

to the height, till the top-ſtone of it is ſet up, or as the Apoſtle phraſeth it (*Eph: 4. 13.*) *Till we all come to a perfect man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fullneſs of Chriſt.* Though a man hath been once truly humbled, yet God humbles him againe, that he may be humbled gradually as well as truly to his own mind. They that are humbled by affliction, may need more afflictions to humble them. The ſame meanes by which faith and repentance are wrought at firſt, doe alſo encreaſe and ſtrengthen faith and repentance. Thoſe meanes by which a man is at firſt purged, are very proper for his further purging (*John 15. 2.*) *Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.* As no man can be a true branch (hypocrites and formaliſts are branches only in appearance and profeſſion, they were never truly purged, now, I ſay, as no man can be a true branch) till he is purged, ſo God purgeth thoſe who are true fruit-bearing branches more and more, that they may bring forth more fruit. And the means by which he purgeth them, that is, mortifieth their corruptions, ſeldome reach this bleſſed effect at once or twice working, and therefore the Lord is even conſtrained to worke theſe things twice, thrice, or oftentimes, elſe the worke would not be brought to the intended iſſue.

Thirdly, In that it is ſayd, *All theſe things worketh God oftentimes, not alwayes.*

Obſerve.

Man ſhould make haſt to anſwer the call of God, and come up to what he requireth of him.

For though God worke theſe things oftentimes, yet no man knowes how often he will worke, and we may all know, he will not worke alwayes. 'Tis a high and dangerous preſumption to deferre at any time upon hopes that God will work at another time, becauſe in ſome caſes he workes oftentimes. Remember (as was ſhewed before in opening the words) this thrice is the leaſt number of often, as twice is the leaſt number of any; two or three are the leaſt number that makes a Church-aſſembly (*Math: 18. 20.*) The Prophet ſaith (*Amos 2.4.*) *For three tranſgreſſions of Judah, and for four, I will not turne away the puniſhment thereof.* Implying that if men multiply their tranſgreſſions, God will not alwayes

alwayes give them meanes of repentance, but powre out wrath upon them; So *Elihu* saith, God worketh *twice and thrice*; but if men will sin three or foure times, where is their warrant that God will pardon or passe by their sins? The Prophet did not binde up the mercy of God precisely to two or three transgressions, but if men sin without bounds, he shewes they have no ground to expect God should be mercifull. One of the Jewish Rabbins (as some expound him) concludes peremptorily, If man sin twice or thrice God will spare, but if foure times God will punish. We doe not circumscribe the grace of God to a speciall number, and possibly that Rabbin did not intend it so, but only that all should take heed they doe not abuse the grace of God. That God multiplyeth to pardon, or (as we render, *Isa:* 55. 7.) *Pardoneth abundantly*, is no security for any man to sin aboundantly, or to multiply transgressions. *My spirit shall not alwayes strive with man* (saith the Lord, *Gen:* 6. 3.) I have striven long already, and I will yet strive longer, even an hundred and twenty yeares, but I will not strive alwayes. God gave *Jezebel* a space to repent (*Rev:* 2. 21.) but when she repented not, he did not promise her a new space to repent in, but threatned her with wrath to the utmost if she repented not. There is a frequency in the worke of God to reduce sinners, but not a perpetuity. And as in this verse *Elihu* reports this frequency of his worke, so in the next he reports that to be the designe of it,

Rabbi Selom: colligit ter tantum homini ignoscere deum; at quarto si ad peccandum redierit esse quod sibi à gehenna timeat; et id esse putat quod hoc loco ab Elihu dicatur.

Vers. 30. *To bring back his soule from the pit, to be enlightned with the light of the living.*

This verse (I say) sheweth the purpose of God in working *twice, thrice, or oftentimes with man.* This purpose (as was touched before) is two-fold. First, to free and deliver him from evill, the worst of evills, a horrible *pit*. Secondly, to estate him in and give him possession of not only that which is good, but best of all, *the light of the living*. Nor is this purpose of God a bare desire (that's often fruitless and succeislesse) but a strong or setled resolution, *to bring back the sick mans soule from the pit*. And *Elihu* (we may suppose) spake thus, as to presse *Job* to hasten the worke of his repentance; so to put him in hope (upon consideration of this designe of God in afflicting him) that he should be

be delivered from his afflictions, and have not only his life continued, but the comforts of it restored to him. As if he had sayd, *Be not afraid, doe not look upon thy condition as hopeless, or that the humiliation of thy selfe will be fruitlesse, for I dare assure thee, God hath gracious purposes and intendments towards thee in working these things.*

And here we have a two-fold gracious purpose of God expressed; First, to deliver him from evill, *to bring back his soule from the pit.* Secondly, to doe him good, or to bestow positive blessings upon him (as was shewed at the 28th verse) even *to be enlightned with the light of the living*; As if he had sayd, *God in all this aymes only at mans good, that his sin unrepented of be not his death and destruction, and that under a sence of Divine favour towards him, he may lead a comfortable life here, and be happy for ever.*

To bring back his soule from the pit.

It is sayd at the 28th verse, *He will deliver his soule from going into the pit*; in both places the pit is the same.

But seeing the Lord there promised to deliver his soule from going into the pit, how is he sayd here, *to bring back his soule from the pit?* A man being delivered from going to the pit, cannot be sayd to be brought back from the pit.

I answer in two things; the words rendred *to bring back his soule from the pit*, may be read thus; *to turne away his soule from the pit*; that is, to preserve him from death. So the Hebrew word is used (*Chap:* 15. 13.) as also (*Mal:* 2. 6.) *He walked with me in peace and equity, and did turne away many from iniquity.* If we take that rendring of the word, then the expressions in both places beare the same sence. But taking it according to our reading, in which *to bring back his soule from the pit*, sounds, as if the man had been in the pit already; and it may well be sayd so, because a man in great affliction, whether of soule or body, is, as it were, dead, or buried alive. For as when God converts a sinner, he (upon the matter) brings him back from hell; so when he delivers him from any grievous sickness, he doth (upon the matter) bring him back from the grave. *Heman* in spirituall afflictions and soule-desertions, the terrours of the Lord being upon him, called himselfe *free among the dead, like the slaine that lye in the grave,* whom

whom God remembreth no more, and they are cut off from thy hand, (*Pſal:* 88. 5.) They that are neere the pit of death, are not, much, improperly, called dead, and they that being in ſuch a deſperate caſe are kept from going downe to the pit, are not, much, improperly ſayd to be brought back from the pit, or pulled out of it. In which ſence we may keep to our owne reading; and ſo to *bring back his ſoule from the pit*, notes only the extreame danger wherein he was, whether ſpirituall or temporall, and Gods graciouſneſs in delivering him from it.

Hence note.

When God reſtores a man out of any deſperate condition, whether of ſoule or body, he gives him a new life; he brings him in one reſpect back from the grave, and in another from hell.

As a ſick man, he is brought from the grave, and as a ſinner he is brought from hell. Great deliverances are a kind of new creation; And freſh bleſſings are to us as freſh beings. Take theſe two inferences from it.

Firſt, How ſhould they, who have been under great outward afflictions, praiſe the Lord when they are delivered! They who having had the ſentence of death in themſelves, ſhould look upon themſelves when reſtored, as men raiſed from the dead. And how ſhould ſinners praiſe the Lord, when he hath reconciled them to himſelfe, and pardoned their ſins. In doing this for them, he delivereth them from wrath, from hell, and from eternall death. Let ſuch praiſe the name of the Lord, and ſay, as in the text, *He hath delivered our ſoules from the pit.*

Secondly, Let ſuch live unto God, having received a new life from God; They that have received a new temporall life from God, ought to dedicate it unto God; how much more they that have received new ſpirituall life? They that have received it indeed, cannot but dedicate it unto God. This negative mercy calls aloud for all that we are or have to be given up to God, but that poſitive mercy which followeth, calleth yet lowder for it.

And to be enlightned with the light of the living.

Nomen חיים *non ſumitur pro quibuſlibet hominibus hac vita fruentibus,*

Take it for temporall, ſpirituall, or eternall life, all theſe ends are accompliſhed in thoſe merciſull workes of God to poore ſinners; ſome reſtraine the text to the light of this temporall life, others

others enlarge it to the light of ſpirituall and eternall life. We are *enlightned with the light of the living*, When the comforts of this life are reſtored, much more are they, who are reſtored to the comforts of their ſpirituall life, and ſo to the hope of eternall life.

ſed pro divitiis potentibus, vivere eſt vigere, valere. Sunt qui ad futuram vitã reſerunt, ſed id ſanam quidem Allegoricè intelligi, poſtquam ad literam de hac vita intellexerũ. Merc:

By *the living*, we are not to underſtand thoſe who are barely on this ſide the grave, and yet breath in the ayre; or who have only a weake ſhadowed ſpirituall life, which they ſcarce know of or perceive. The *living* here are they that live comfortably and proſperouſly both as to ſoule and body. Thus 'tis ſayd in that Prophecy of Chriſt (*Pſal:* 72. 13.) *He ſhall live, and to him ſhall be given of the gold of Sheba: prayer alſo ſhall be made for him continually, and dayly ſhall he be praiſed.* Chriſt lives to purpoſe, he lives as a Prince, in power and dignity, yea he is the Prince of life. It was more then a ſenſitive or rationall life which *Davids* faith was aſſured of, when he ſayd (*Pſal:* 118. 17.) *I ſhall not dye but live*; his meaning was, I ſhall live honourably and triumphantly, declaring (with joy) the workes of the Lord. Thus here, *To be enlightned with the light of the living*, is, to enjoy a comfortable life, or to live happily.

Hence note.

A troubled ſtate is a dark ſtate, ſickneſs and ſorrow, whether inward or outward, are darkneſs.

They are darkned with the darkneſs of the dead, whoſe life is wrapped up in anguiſh and ſorrow.

Secondly, Note.

The deſigne and purpoſe of God in all his ordinances, and providences towards his people is for their good.

All that hath been ſayd before, emptieth it ſelfe into theſe ſayings, *To keep back his ſoule from the pit, and to be enlightned with the light of the living.* The Lord hath no eye in theſe workes to his owne gaine, but mans good. *The Lord doth not willingly grieve, nor afflict the children of men* (Lam: 3. 35.) He taketh no pleaſure in it abſtractly conſidered, nor doth he look for any profit by it: Much leſſe doth he it (as it follows, *v.* 36.) meerely *to cruſh under his feete all the priſoners of the earth.* All that he expects by it as to himſelfe is to be glorified by all (for himſelfe is above all,

all, and therefore deſigneth himſelfe in all) yet the glory which God hath by man is only the manifeſtation of his glory, not any addition to it. The benefit which God aymes at in afflicting man returnes to man. He would have man bettered by affliction, and as ſoone as man is bettered by affliction, every thing ſhall goe better with him, and he ſhall be delivered from affliction. (*Rom:* 8. 28.) *All things worke together for the good of them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpoſe.* And as all things worke together for the good of them, who are the called according to his purpoſe, ſo it is the purpoſe of God that all things ſhould worke together for their good, and that is not a ſucceſsleſs purpoſe. Indeed every rod upon the backs of the wicked hath a voyce in it, to call them from the pit of death and deſtruction, and to be enlightned with the light of the living; but God makes this call effectuall to all his elect, none of whom ſhall periſh with the world. So that a godly man ſhould be ſo farre from judging himſelfe dealt with as an enemy (as *Job* in his extremity did) when he is moſt ſorely afflicted, that indeed he may ſee the love and fatherly care of God in it. All the providentiall diſpenſations of God worke to glorious ends. Sometimes for the outward good of his people in this life, alwayes for good as to their ſpirituall and eternall life.

Therefore, lay aſide hard thoughts of God whatſoever hard things he is a doing, or you are ſuffering. The wayes in which God leads us, may poſſibly be very darke, yet they run to this poynt, to keep us from the pit of darkneſs, and that we may be enlightned with the light of the living.

Thirdly, Note.

Man would undoe himſelfe both for here and for ever, if God did not worke wonderfully for him, and powerfully keep him from deſtruction.

All theſe things God worketh twice and thrice, to keep our ſoules from the pit; man left to himſelfe would run head-long upon miſchiefe in this world, & upon eternall miſery in the world to come. Nothing but the hand of God can hold man from ruining himſelfe. The heart of man is ſo ſet upon ſin, that he will rather looſe his ſoule, then leave his luſt; and will rather dye then that ſhall. 'Tis as eaſie to ſtay the motion of the Sun, or to turne back

back the courſe of nature, as to ſtay or turne back the naturall motion or courſe of the heart in ſinning. An almighty power muſt doe the latter as well as the former. So that if the Lord did not put forth more then mercy, even mercy clothed with power, no man could be ſaved; ſhould God wiſh us never ſo well, and tell us what good he hath layd up for us, if we will but believe and obey him; ſhould he tell us he hath riches of mercy, and that every one who will come ſhall have his ſhare, yet we ſhould never have any, if left to our owne chuſing. 'Tis a worke therefore both of mercy and power which keepes us from the pit. God had much adoe to keepe *Lot* from being conſumed in *Sodome*. He had warning to be gone, yet he was loth to goe; The text ſaith (*Gen:* 19. 16.) *While Lot lingred the men layd hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters, the Lord being mercifull to him, and they brought him forth, and ſet him without the City*; elſe probably he had lingred, till he had periſhed. Surely if God did not thruſt ſinners out of the *Sodome* of this world (as we ſay) by head and ſhoulders, they would periſh in it and with it. How wonderfull is the goodneſſe of God who doth all theſe things, not only to keep poore creatures from going downe to the pit, both temporally, and eternally, but alſo that they *may be enlightned with the light of the living*.

JOB. Chap. 33. Verſ. 31, 32, 33.

Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me, hold thy peace, and I will ſpeak.
If thou haſt any thing to ſay, anſwer me: ſpeak, for I deſire to juſtifie thee.
If not, hearken unto me; hold thy peace, and I ſhall teach thee wiſdome.

THeſe three verſes containe the Epilogue or concluſion of *Elihu's* firſt addreſſe to *Job*. In which we may conſider theſe three things.

Firſt, He perſwadeth him to a due attention and ſilent conſideration, both of what he had ſayd, or ſhould ſay further. (*v.* 31.) *Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me*, &c.

Secondly, He gives him liberty, and faire leave to reply, if he ſhould pleaſe to what he hath already ſpoken (*v.* 32.) *If thou haſt any thing to ſay anſwer me, ſpeake.* To which conceſſion or invitation he adds a very friendly and an ingenuous reaſon in the cloſe of the verſe; *For I deſire to juſtifie thee.*

Thirdly, He profeſſeth his owne readineſs to proceed and ſpeak further with him, or to carry on this diſcourſe, in caſe *Job* had nothing to reply. (*v.* 33d) *If not, hearken unto me, hold thy peace, and I ſhall teach thee wiſdome.*

Verſ. 31. *Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me.*

In this verſe *Elihu* calls for a two-fold attention; Firſt, to thoſe things he had already ſpoken. Secondly, to thoſe things which he was yet to ſpeake. What he had already ſpoken, he deſireth him to conſider and make reply if he pleaſed, as is cleare (*v.* 32.) and as to what he had yet further to ſay, he defireth his attention and ſubmiſſion, as it followeth (*v.* 33.) *If not hearken unto me, hold thy peace.*

Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me.

הַאֲזִינָה *magnam mentis attentionem denotat,* Here are two words of attention, *marke*, and *hearken*, and both very ſignificant ones. The word rendred *mark*, ſignifieth to attend,

tend, with utmoſt diligence; it it ſometimes rendred by *hearkning* (Iſa: 32. 3.) *The eyes of them that ſee ſhall not be dim: and the eares of them that heare ſhall hearken*; that is, they who heretofore, through the juſt judgement of God for their willfull ſhutting their eyes and eares, inſeeing did ſee but not perceive, and in hearing did heare but not underſtand (*Iſa:* 6.10.29.10. compared with *Math:* 13.14.) ſhall at laſt ſee clearely and attend diligently to the will of God delivered to them; yea it ſeemes to note ſome ſpeciall geſture, as the lifting up of the eare to heare. For as there is a lifting up of the voyce in the zealous ſpeaker, ſo of the eare in the diligent hearer. To *marke* is to heare and obſerve, to heare and lay to heart the things which are ſpoken, *Mark well, O Job,*

quæ ſit cum geſtu, puta aurium erectione. Cornel: a Lap: in Pro: 2. 3.

and hearken.

That's a word of a large extent, to hearken is more then to heare; it takes in not only, firſt the worke of the eare, but ſecondly, the worke of the minde; 'tis hearing, firſt, with underſtanding; ſecondly, with beleeving; yea thirdly, it takes in the worke of the whole man in obeying, or ſubmitting to what is ſpoken. Thus God ſayd to *Adam* (Gen: 3. 17.) *Becauſe thou haſt hearkned unto the voyce of thy wife*, that is, becauſe thou haſt obeyed her voyce, and done the thing ſhe perſwaded thee to; After hearkning comes doing. Laſtly, it includes alſo a worke of the affections; hearkning is with delighting, that which we hearken to we are pleaſed with; 'tis (like good muſick) ſweet unto us; in this compaſſe and extent we may expound theſe words, *Mark well, O Job, and hearken unto me.* And theſe words, eſpecially the former of the two, rendred *marke*, are often uſed in Scripture, when the people of God deſire and begge that he would take notice of and attend unto their prayer. Thus *David* more then once (*Pſ:* 5.2.) *Hearken unto the voyce of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray* (Pſal: 66.19.) *but verily God hath heard me, he hath attended to the voyce of my prayer* (Pſal: 130.2.) *Lord heare my voyce, let thine eares be attentive to the voyce of my ſupplication.* Now, as when we deſire that God would heare our prayer, we deſire that he would be very attentive to our prayer, and not only ſo, but doe what we pray for, and that our prayers may be welcome, acceptable, and delightfull to him; ſo when we are ſayd

שָׁמַע *auſcultavit, exaudivit, dicto obedions fuit, paruit.*

to marke and hearken to what is spoken to us, all the powers of our inward man, the understanding, will and affections are at worke in hearing.

Hencen ote.

He that will profit by hearing must be an attentive hearer.

He must mark and hearken, a fruitfull hearer doth more then heare, he markes; not only is his eare at worke, but his minde, his heart, his whole soule is, as it were, transformed into an eare, or is active at his eare. There are many, and it were well there were more *hearers* of the word, but there are few *markers* of the word, many come to Sermons, yet but few hearken unto Sermons; every hearer is not a *marker*, not *a hearkner* to what he heareth, and not being so, he can scarcely be called a hearer; for they only that are *markers* shall attaine that mark of which the Apostle speaks (*Phil:* 3. 14.) *I presse toward the mark for the price of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.* What is our mark in hearing? is it not salvation by Christ, and glory with him? Now unlesse we are markers, we never presse towards, much lesse attaine that mark, *the price of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me,*

hold thy peace, and I will speake.

חרש *fodit, fundum aravit. Metaphoricè, cogitavit, fodit cogitatione, intentus vel attentus fuit rei alicujus cōficiendæ, sicut arator præparat terram ante seminatorem.*

'Tis but one word in the Hebrew which we translate, *hold thy peace*, and it signifieth properly to dig or plow the ground, and by a metaphor to thinke of, or to meditate, because thoughts goe deep in the soule, a man doth, as it were, plow up his own spirit, while he is meditating or thinking seriously (*Pro:* 3.29.) *Devise not evill*, or (it is this word) *plow not up evill*; that's a bad soyle indeed, to be plowing up. They that plow evill, shall sow the wind, and (except they repent) reape the whirlewind. The prophet exhorting *Ephraim* to break up their fallow ground and sow in righteousness, that they might reap mercy (*Hos:* 10. 12.) reproves them (*v.* 13.) for a very unprofitable piece of husbandry, by this word, *Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity, ye have eaten the fruit of lyes*, that is, ye have plotted, devised, and contrived wicked things, and ye have fared accordingly. Now as the word signifieth to meditate, by a metaphor, from digging or plowing; so by the figure antiphrasis or contrary speaking,

ing, it signifies to forbeare doing or speaking, to sit still, or as we render it here, to *hold our peace*, and say nothing. (*Isa:* 41. 1.) *Keepe silence before me, O Islands.* (Psal: 50. 3.) *Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence*; that is, he will speak aloud. *Elihu* bespeakes *Job* in the affirmative, *hold thy peace*, be silent.

Videtur Jobus se avertisse, vel displicētiæ signum dedisse, illum igitur ad se audiendum invitat. Scult:

Some conceive *Job* began to interrupt *Elihu*, or gave some token of dislike, while he was discoursing; as if he had received his speech with disgust, and not only inwardly stomacked at it. But did not forbeare to discover it by some significant gesture or frowne, and that *Elihu* perceiving this, desired him to hold his peace; As if he had sayd, If you desire to reape any benefit by what I speak, be patient, and doe not interrupt me. But I conceive there was no such height nor heate of spirit in *Job* at that time; He began now to be sedate and quiet enough, being somewhat convinced of his former error and intemperance of speech.

But some may say; was it not an over-bold part in *Elihu* a young man to impose silence upon *Job*, or to bid him *hold his peace?*

I answer; *Elihu* doth not bid *Job* hold his peace, either, first, as if he had seene him unwilling to let him speake, or would not heare him any more; *Job* was a very patient hearer; he heard his friends patiently, and he had heard *Elihu* too with silence and patience, yea though *Elihu* offered him leave, yea almost provoked him to speake (*v.* 5.) yet he did not but gave him scope to speake out. Nor did *Elihu* speake this, secondly, as if he slighted *Job*, or thought him a man unable to answer him, or speake to purpose, for presently in the next verse he desireth him againe to speake. Nor thirdly, as if he had such high thoughts of his owne wisdome, and loved so much to heare himselfe speake (as some men doe) that he cared not to heare others, but would engrosse all the discourse. Nor was it, fourthly, because he saw such an affectation in *Job* to speake, that he needed (as the Apostle speaks of some, *Tit:* 1. 11.) *to have his mouth stopt.* It was not upon any of these or such like reasons, that *Elihu* desired *Job* to hold his peace; but it was either first, that himselfe might speak more clearely, and carry his matter through to his understanding; or secondly, that he might set the matter more home upon his conscience, and move him to consider yet more seriously what he had sayd,

ſayd, of the various wayes of Gods dealing with man to humble his ſoule, and bring him neerer to himſelfe; or laſtly, that *Job* might perceive and take notice, that he was the man aymed at in all the foregoing parable. As if he had ſayd, Sit downe quietly, and conſider with thy ſelfe, whether all this diſcourſe hath tended, or whether or no thou art not the man intended in it. As Chriſt when he had ſpoken that parable of the ſower concluded (*Math:* 13. 9.) *He that hath an eare to heare, let him heare*; that is, let him take it home to himſelfe; or as Chriſt concludeth his Epiſtles to the ſeven Churches in the ſecond and third Chapters of the *Revelation*, with, *He that hath an eare, let him heare what the Spirit ſaith to the Churches*; ſo doth *Elihu* to *Job* in ſpeciall, *Mark well, O Job, and hearken unto me, hold thy peace.*

This ſilence was made of old in great aſſemblyes (*Majeſtate manus*) by putting the hand to the mouth, and then ſtretching it forth. *Acts* 12. 17. *Acts* 13. 16. *Chap.* 19. 23. *Chap.* 26. 1.

If any would know yet more diſtinctly what *Elihu* meant when he bid *Job hold his peace?* I anſwer,

Firſt, Negatively, not a bare ſilence, or ſaying nothing, but affirmatively, when he ſayth, *hold thy peace*; it might note theſe two things.

Firſt, That he would have him much in the worke of conſideration, or to forbeare ſpeaking, that he might be more in meditating, and weighing, and laying things to heart; he would have him bring what he had ſpoken to the ballance of the Sanctuary, and then to his owne heart. A man is never more buſie then when he thus holds his peace.

Secondly, When he ſaith, *hold thy peace*, it might note that he deſired his ſubmiſſion to the counſel given, or to be given him; He would have him bridle his tongue, in token that his ſpirit was brideled. He would have *Jobs* ſilence ſay, ſpeake on, I will ſay nothing, let the truth of God reigne and rule over me by thy word. What *Samuel* anſwered to the Lord himſelfe (1 *Sam:* 3. 10.) *Speak, Lord, for thy ſervant heareth*; that ſhould we anſwer to thoſe who ſpeak to us from the Lord; ſpeak ye, we will heare and hold our peace: or we ſhould ſay with good *Cornelius*, when *Peter* came to him (*Acts* 10. 33.) *We are all here preſent before God, to heare all things that are commanded thee of God.* When a man holds his peace (upon theſe termes) 'tis a ſigne he layeth downe

downe his owne wiſdome, and his will, he doth not ſtand upon his *pantofloes* (as we ſay) nor abound in his owne ſence, but is ready to be delivered or caſt into the mould of any holy and wholeſome doctrine which ſhall be delivered unto him. *They are in the fitteſt frame to hold the truth which others ſpeake, who can withhold themſelves from ſpeaking.*

Further, There is a two-fold *holding of the peace*. Firſt, at the works of God, or at what God doth (*Lev:* 10. 3.) when God had ſmitten the two ſons of *Aaron* dead with fire from heaven, *Aaron held his peace*; that is, he did not murmure at, nor contradict what God had done. That alſo was *Davids* temper (*Pſal:* 39. 9.) *I was dumbe, I opened not my mouth, becauſe thou Lord didſt it.* The Prophet *Jeremy* deſcribes an humbled ſoule in the ſame poſture (*Lam:* 3. 28.) *He ſitteth alone and keepeth ſilence, becauſe he hath borne it upon him.* When God layeth his yoke or choſſe upon us, 'tis our duty to be ſilent and ſubmit (*Zach:* 2. 13.) *Be ſilent, O all fleſh, before the Lord: for he is raiſed up out of his holy habitation*, that is, the Lord begins to worke, therefore let all men, or men of all ſorts and degrees be quiet and ſay nothing either diſcontentedly or complainingly. In all theſe Scriptures, *holding our peace* is called for and commanded or ſhewed at the workes of God.

Secondly, There is a holding of our peace at the word of God, or at what God ſpeaketh. Thus 'tis when not only the tongue but the heart is ſilent, and every thought is brought into ſubjection or captivity to the obedience of Chriſt. The heart of man often ſpeakes much, and is very clamorous, when he ſaith nothing with his tongue. That's to hold our peace indeed, when the heart is quiet, let God ſay or doe what he will. 'Tis not more our duty *to reſiſt the Devill*, that is, all his helliſh whiſperings and temptations to the doing of evill, then 'tis *to ſubmit to God* in all his ſpeakings and diſpenſations. *Elihu* ſpeaking in the name of the Lord, faithfully adviſeth *Job* in this ſence, to *hold his peace.*

Hence learne.

We ought to ſubmit and keep ſilence when the truth of God is ſpoken. Or, *when the minde of God is brought unto us, there muſt be no replying but obeying, no diſputing but ſubmitting.*

They have learned much, who know how and when to ſay nothing.

thing. *Solomon* ſaith (*Eccl.* 3. 6.) *There is a time to keep ſilence, and a time to ſpeake*; but this kind of ſilence is in ſeaſon at all times, we ought alwayes to be ſilent thus, that is, alwayes ſubmit to the minde of God. We need to be minded of this, becauſe the pride and over-weening of man is great. We have need to put a bridle upon our tongues, much more upon our hearts; it is hard to bring our wills and our underſtandings under; we are apt to ſtrive and ſtruggle when truth comes neere us; yea to kick at it, when it comes very neere and home to us, though indeed the neerer it comes the better, nor can it ever come too neere. The Apoſtle *James* apprehended this when he gave that admonition (*Chap.* 1. 21.) *Receive with meekneſſe, the ingraffed word, which is able to ſave your ſoules*: Meekneſſe is that grace which moderates anger; a paſſionate or fierce ſpirit, receiveth not the word, but riſeth up againſt it, turnes not to it but upon it; and, which is worſt of all, turnes it to evill, not to good, turnes light into darkneſſe; and ſo the word of life becomes a ſavour of death for want of a due ſubmiſſion to it. Therefore *hearken, and hold your peace* when the word of God is ſpoken. Do not ſay it is but the word of man, becauſe delivered by man; God ſpeaks in and by his faithfull Meſſengers; ye oppoſe the authority of the living God, not a mortall dying creature, when you reject the word. And remember, it is not only our duty but our liberty to give up our ſelves priſoners to the truths of God; we are never ſo free as when bound by it or to it. And as we ſhould hold our peace at or ſubmit to all the truths of God in all caſes, ſo eſpecially in theſe three.

Firſt, When we are reproved for our ſins in practice; then we ſhould not ſtand excuſing what we have done, but repent of it.

Secondly, When we are ſhewed our errour in opinion; then we ſhould not ſtand diſputing, and arguing for what we hold, but recant it. 'Tis time to hold our peace, when once it appeares to us, that we doe not hold the truth. To erre is common to man, but to perſevere in an errour, to the defence and patronage of it, is more then inhumane, deviliſh.

Thirdly, We ſhould hold our peace when our duty is plaine before us; then we ſhould not ſtand queſtioning it, but doe it. *Whatſoever thy hand findeth to doe* (ſaith *Solomon*, *Eccl.* 9. 10. that

that is, whatſoever appeares to be a duty) *doe it with all thy might*. Hold thy tongue, but doe not withhold thy hand when once thy hand hath found what muſt be done. *Elihu* at this time was dealing with *Job* upon all theſe three poynts; He told him his ſin; that he had been too querlous and impatient, he ſhewed him his error, that he had been too bold with God, becauſe innocent towards men; And he preſſed him to duty, both that, and how he ought to humble himſelfe before the Lord. The Apoſtle treating about that great poynt of juſtification, tells us God will at laſt cauſe all men to hold their peace. (*Rom.* 3. 19.) *Now we know that what things ſoever the law ſaith, it ſaith to them who are under the law, that every mouth may be ſtopped, and all the world may become guilty before God*; that is, man will have nothing to ſay, but ſit downe ſilent, and hold his peace, or only ſay, I am nothing, I have deſerved nothing but death and condemnation, when he once underſtands the holineſs and ſtrictneſs of the law, together with the unholineſs and looſeneſs of his owne heart and life.

Hence note.

It ſpeakes yea proclaimes a gracious prudence, to know how and when to hold our peace and ſay nothing.

When men inſiſt upon their owne conceit and reaſon, when they logick it unduely with God or men, and will needs ſeeme to know more then the word teacheth them, what doe they but give evidence againſt themſelves, that as yet they know nothing as the word teacheth, or as they ought to know, and themſelves leaſt of all? 'Tis pride and preſumption, not prudence and underſtanding which opens ſuch mens mouths. We never profit by what we heare, till (in the ſence opened) we have learned *to hold our peace*. The counſel which *Elihu* gave *Job*, was to hold his peace; yet he layd no conſtraint upon him to refraine neceſſary ſpeaking, but put him upon it in the next verſe.

Verſ. 32. *If thou haſt any thing to ſay, anſwer me; ſpeake for I deſire to juſtifie thee.*

Leſt *Elihu* ſhould be interpreted to have taken too much upon him, or to have denied *Job* his liberty of ſpeaking, when he

sayd, *hold thy peace*; he here calls him to speake; This is a full proofe, that his intent was not to barre him from speaking, but only that he should forbeare unnecessary speaking. As if he had sayd, *Now that I have gone thus farre, if I have spoken any thing that thou art unsatisfied in, and dost desire I should explaine my selfe about; speake thy minde freely; for though I have more to say, yet I will not hinder thee from saying what thou canst fairely say for thy selfe, neither will I over-burthen thy memory, with too much at once, therefore come now and answer if thou wilt or canst to what is already spoken.*

The Hebrew is, *If thou hast words answer me*, that is, if thou hast arguments to defend thy selfe with, or to oppose me; if thou hast such words ready, as have the weight of reason or authority in them to maintaine thy cause, bring them forth, I am not afraid of what thou canst object; neither am I unwilling to heare thy defence.

Some expound *Elihu* speaking Ironically, at least Rhetorically, *If thou hast any thing to say answer me, speake and spare not.* As if he had sayd, *Possibly thou canst set all right, and shew me where I am wrong. Possibly thou thinkest I have spoken amisse, when I sayd, In this thou art not righteous, goe to then, shew me my mistake, or wherein I have misapprehended thee, make it good if thou art able against my assertion, that thou art just and righteous, even in that wherein I have endeavoured to detect thy unrighteousnes. Possibly thou mayst bring me to be of thy opinion, and then surely I shall justifie thee, and retract my censure of thee.* Rhetoricians call this an Artificiall prohibition, by a concession; or the admitting of another to doe that, which they know, he cannot doe when he hath done his utmost, or (as we say) hath left no stone unturn'd to doe it. But I conceive, *Elihu* spake plainly to *Job*, and did not like a subtle Orator, put him upon impossibles, but like a sincere friend, soberly and seriously invited him to doe and say as much as was possible in his owne defence. *If thou hast any thing to say, answer me.*

Artificiosa prohibitio per concessionem.

Simile est illud poetæ. Si, sequere Italiam ventis, pete regna per undas. Virgil: Æniad. 3.

Hence note.

Wise men though they have more to speake, and purpose to speake more, yet are willing that others should speake too.

Though they can speake still, yet they are ready to sit still and

and heare. *The most prudent speakers, are also patient hearers. Elihu* when he began to speake (*Chap.* 32. 18, 19.) compared himselfe *to a full bottle*, he was even burdened with his owne conceptions. *I am full of matter* (sayd he there) *the spirit within me constraineth me; Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent, it is ready to burst like new bottles.* And though he had not halfe emptied himselfe, yet he could stop his vessel and containe himselfe. *Answer me*, I will heare. Though *Elihu* was warme in his worke, labouring tooth and nayle to convince and humble *Job*, and shew him wherein he had exceeded and offended, though he was teaching him to give glory to God, and to abhorre himselfe (as at last he did) repenting in dust and ashes, yet he was unwilling to determine till he had heard him speake, if he had any thing to speake, and a minde to speake it.

Hence note.

'Tis but equall to give him leave to speake for himselfe, with whom we are unsatisfied.

How else can we either get satisfaction, or *give an account* why we remaine unsatisfied? We must not condemne any man in hast, nor judge him till we have heard him. *Necessary stops are no delayes.* They may procure not only a better but a speedier issue of our business, especially in matters of controversie. Politicians have a rule, *Take time and you may doe any thing.* To make hast slowly is the surest way of making hast. Many a journeying man had rid more miles in a day, if he had not rid too fast. They who will doe all at once, or in a breath, often loose their breath, but seldome doe any thing, that's worth the doing. And as hastiness hinders us in doing, so it altogether unfits us for censuring. Time brings forth truth; a sentence deferred, may afterwards be given, but when it is once given, it cannot be recalled; therefore it is good before we censure, to heare every man out; If this moderation and wel-tempered ingenuity were exercised in all our controversies with others, it would be a great helpe to the ending of controversies. And we should either see no reason to condemne many, or condemne them with more reason, had we patience to heare them. But when first, we will not heare an answer, or when secondly, we suppresse our opposites with power and violence, whom we cannot answer or convince by

argument; or thirdly, when we interpret what they ſay in anſwer to the worſt ſence; or fourthly, when we are glad to finde any weakneſs or inſufficiency in their anſwers, and are ſo haſty to condemne, that we will not give them leave to recollect their thoughts, or thinke better on't to mend their anſwers, and explaine their meaning, either by ſpeech or writing; it is impoſſible breaches ſhould be healed, & differences reconciled, or that ever we ſhould come to a cleare & full underſtanding of one another. This offer made by *Elihu* to *Job* is a good patterne, and ſhewes us how to deale with brethren in all ſuch caſes: and that which followeth ſheweth the beſt and nobleſt ground of ſuch amicable condiſcentions, even a willingneſs not only to agree with but to embrace thoſe from whom we differ. That's the generall ſence of what *Elihu* aſſureth *Job*, and would have him confident of in the next words.

For I deſire to juſtifie thee.

As if he had ſayd; *I have not ſpoken all or any of theſe things to thee, becauſe I would conquer thee, nor doe I now provoke or invite thee to ſpeake, becauſe I have a mind to lye at catch, or entangle thee in thy anſwers, for I tell thee, my heart and my ayme in this overture, is, I* (heartily) *deſire to juſtifie thee.*

חפץ The word whereby *Elihu* expreſſeth this *deſire*, ſignifieth more then a bare deſire.

It notes, firſt, an earneſt deſire, or ſtrength of deſire.

Secondly, A pleaſing deſire, or delightfull deſire.

The higheſt act of deſire is delight; delight is the intention and ſtrength of affection, or deſire at reſt. As if *Elihu* had ſayd, *I have not ſpoken out of ill will to thee, or deſire of victory over thee, nor would any thing be more welcome newes to my ſoule, then to ſee juſt cauſe of juſtifying thee; it doth not pleaſe me at all to prove that thou art not juſt, it would extreamly pleaſe me, even raviſh my heart with joy if thou couldſt prove thy ſelfe or thy cauſe ſo juſt and faultleſſe, that nothing could be blamed or reproved in either. I deſire to juſtifie thee.*

Non mihi voluptati eſt, ut tuum cauſam injuſtã oſtendam, velim enim eſſe juſtam nec eſſe in te quod reprehendi poſſit.

Merc: צדק *eſt non modo pietatis ſed et veritatis laudem tribuere; ſignificat ſo*

That is, not only to judge thee a godly man, or a man fearing God (which I already doe) but to judge that thou haſt in all things both done and ſpoken well, which as yet I doe not, nor can, unleſſe

unleſſe thou ſheweſt me better reaſon for it then hitherto thou haſt done. *To juſtifie* another is foure wayes applyed in Scripture; as was ſhewed more largely at the ſecond verſe of the former Chapter.

magis propendere ad defendendum quam increpandum. Coc:

Firſt and chiefly 'tis applyed or attributed to God himſelfe (*Rom:* 8. 33.) *It is God that juſtifieth.* God puts man into a ſtate of juſtification, he juſtifieth his perſon ſo fully, that none can (of right) lay any thing to his charge, much leſſe condemne him upon any charge layd againſt him.

Secondly, Man juſtifieth God (*Luke* 7. 29, 30.) *And all the people that heard him, and the Publicans juſtified God, being baptized with the baptiſme of John.* God himſelfe who is the Judge of all men, is condemned by many men; and when things are at worſt, he alwayes hath ſome to juſtifie him. Man juſtifieth God when he honoureth God, taking his part, and owning both his power and his righteouſneſſe in whatſoever he doth. It is impoſſible God ſhould be unjuſt, and God is pleaſed to ſay, we juſtifie him, when we maintaine his wayes as juſt and righteous.

Thirdly, Man juſtifieth himſelfe, when he is either lifted up proudly in the thoughts of what he is or hath done well (*Luke* 18. 11.) or when he upon good grounds can maintaine that to be well done which he hath done.

Fourthly, Man juſtifieth man, when he either conſents to, or approves of what he hath done or ſpoken, whether it be good or bad; he that approves of a man juſtifies him, though the man be unjuſt. (*Prov.* 17. 15.) *He that juſtifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the juſt, even they both are an abomination unto the Lord.* Let a man be never ſo wicked, and doe never ſo wickedly, ſome through ignorance of his wickedneſſe, and others through love to and liking of his wickedneſſe, (being ſuch themſelves) will approve of him, and give him their good word. But (as Chriſt ſpeaks, *Math.* 11. 19.) *Wiſdome is juſtified of her children*; that is, the true lovers and followers of wiſdome, having a right knowledge and eſtimation of her worth, will ſtand by her, and ſpeake for her, when ſlighted by the blind and unknowing world. And as this is true of declarative wiſdome, ſo eſpecially of Chriſt, who is *eſſentiall wiſdome*. His children highly prize and juſtifie him, while the world condemns and contemns him. In this fourth ſence *Elihu* is to be underſtood here, *I deſire to juſtifie thee*; that is,

is, to give testimony unto thee, or subscribe thy certificate, that thou art worthy of commendation. Though *Elihu* was a man of a very warme and keene spirit, full of fire, and mettle, yet he discovered a very honest bent, and a well governed intention towards *Job*, in saying, *I desire to justifie thee*; for 'tis as if he had said; *It would not please me at all to see cause of further censure, but it would please me fully to see cause of approving and acquitting thee.* Therefore doe but state thy case and make out the merits of it, and I shall yield so soon as I see cause. So then, *Elihu* did not carry himself in this business, first, as a party, or as one that had taken a side, and was resolved to hold it (as some doe) right or wrong, because he had appeared in it. Nor Secondly, was he hurryed by passion, or intemperance of spirit. Nor Thirdly, was he hood-winkt by prejudice, or fore-stalled by his opinion against the person. Nor Fourthly, was he engaged by love to contention or hopes of victory. Nor Fifthly, was he purposed to suppresse smother or keepe downe the truth. Nor Sixthly, had he any desire to asperse *Job*, and make him appear black. Nor Seventhly, had he a mind to grieve the man, or burthen him with accusations; but declared a cleare candor and much melting compassion towards his afflicted Antagonist, hungring and thirsting, yea even longing for a just occasion to justifie him.

Verbum justificare sumitur pro justitiam exercere, juste & recte procedere. q. d. statui apud me justa æquitatis leges tecum agere. Bold:

Some, I grant, expound this word *justifie*, as used here by *Elihu* in a very bare and barren sence, as if it implyed only thus much, *I will doe thee right, or I have no mind to doe thee wrong*; but surely the word is much more fruitfull, and beares the signification of a great willingness in *Elihu* to render *Job* as faire as possibly he could, or as his cause would beare to all the world; he waited to understand so much of him and by him, as might enable him to say, he had neither spoken nor done any thing amisse.

Hence note, First.

A good man is glad to see any mans cause or case prove good, or better then he thought it.

The Apostle giving severall Characters of Gospell love or charity, saith (1 *Cor.* 13. 6.) *It rejoyceth not in iniquity, but rejoyceth in the truth.* As charity rejoyceth not in the doing of iniquity, so neither doth it, when others are found to have done iniquity. But it rejoyceth much, when any who are either suspected or charged

charged with iniquity, are upon due tryall found cleare and acquitted. *Paul* wished that all who heard him had been not only almost but altogether such as he, except his bonds, (*Acts* 26.29.) It is a great argument that a man is good and just, when he heartily witheth that he who hath given occasion to others to think ill of him, may at last appeare better then they thought him.

Secondly note.

A good man seekes not victory but truth, and the good of those he deals with.

When he contends earnestly with others, he desires as earnestly that truth may gaine by that contention. Where a spirit of strife & uncharitablenes possesseth the minds of many men, they love to be vexing & trampling upon those they deale with, rather then helping and enforming them. *This evill spirit is the familiar of this age*; That which the Apostle spake (*Phil.* 1. 15.) of not a few who had the name of Gospel Ministers (*some preach Christ even of envy and strife, and some also of good will*; the one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely) the same may be said of many disputers and polemicall writers; they doe it enviously, they doe it out of love to strife and contention, not out of love either to truth or to those with whom they contend and strive; this is a bad spirit, a spirit far unlike that which ruled in *Elihu*, who wished that the sharpest reprehensions he gave *Job*, might end in his justification. There should be such a spirit in man contending with man, as there is in God contending with man; who doth not thunder against sinners, because he would have them perish, or delighteth in their destruction; but doth it, first, to awaken them; secondly, to humble them; thirdly, to convert them; fourthly, to justifie them; and lastly, to save them for ever. *I write not these things* (saith the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 4. 14.) *to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warne you.* As if he had said, I intend not to asperse you, or throw dirt upon you, but only advise you to wipe off the dirt that is cast upon you, or to keep your selves out of the dirt. I would either be a means to cleanse you, or provoke you to preserve your selves cleane.

Note Thirdly.

It is our duty to justifie those whom we oppose, when they can clear themselves.

As

As *Elihu* ſpake very ingeniouſly, ſo not at all beyond his duty; we ſhould be glad when they whom we have ſuſpected or charged appeare faire, or better then we ſuſpected; he that doth ſo muſt be juſtified: as we muſt not hold the truth of God, ſo we muſt not hold the credit of our neighbour in unrighteouſneſs. We ſhould have three ends in dealing and debating with others. Firſt, to convince them of their errours and ſins. Secondly, to recover them out of ſin and errour. Thirdly, to acquit them in what they appeare and can approve themſelves not to have ſinned or erred. *Elihu* aimed at and attained the firſt and ſecond in his debate with *Job*; and it would have been a greater contentment to him, if (there being no need of thoſe two) he had ſeene cauſe only to have done the third. *Speak* (ſaid he) *for I deſire to juſtifie thee.*

Verſ. 33. *If not, hearken unto me, hold thy peace, and I ſhall teach thee wiſdome.*

Elihu having deſired *Job* to ſpeake, and he either refuſing or having nothing to ſay, he re-aſſumed and re-inforced his former counſell.

Hearken unto me, hold thy peace.

Theſe words were opened, (*v.* 31.) therefore I need not ſtay upon them here; *If not, hearken &c.* and indeed what ſhould they doe but hear and ſubmit, who have nothing to anſwer or reply? eſpecially when ſo gainfull an overture is made them for their encouragement to hear, as *Elihu* made *Job* in the next words, which are alſo the laſt of this diſcourſe.

And I ſhall teach thee wiſdome.

Elihu may ſeeme to take much upon him, and ſhew himſelf very confident, when he thus undertook and promiſed to teach *Job* wiſdome; yet doubtleſs the ground of his confidence was not in himſelfe, but in Gods aſſiſtance; and in *Jobs* humble ſilence. As if he had ſaid, *I ſee thou wilt not ſpeake, but heare, hear then, and I ſhall teach thee wiſdome; for God (I hope) will be with us in this matter, and both open my mouth to ſpeak, and thine eares to hear that which is wiſdome indeed; having given thee a heart to receive inſtruction, he will inſtruct thee to profit, and make thee wiſe to know thy duty and doe it, by my miniſtry, though a weake and unworthy inſtrument in his hand.*

I ſhall teach thee wiſdome. The word which we render to *teach* in another conjugation ſignifieth to learne; and the Nowne ſignifieth a *leader*, or *governour*. As that firſt letter *Aleph* in the Hebrew Alphabet is the leading letter to all that follow, ſo a *Teacher* ſhould be a *leader*, he ſhould goe before thoſe that heare him, by good example as well as by wholſome doctrine. *Be thou an example of the Beleevers*, ſaith the Apoſtle *Timothy* (1 *Epiſt.* 4. 12) who was ſet up in the Church of *Epheſus* a Teacher and an Inſtructer.

אלף *In Kal diſcere in Piel docere hinc Aleph Pædagogus, antecaſſor dux, doctor, qui aliis ſolet præire ſicut Aleph prima litera reliquas antecedit.*

Further, when *Elihu* ſaith, *I will teach thee wiſdome*; his meaning is, I ſhall acquaint thee with that which may make thee wiſe, or I ſhall ſhew thee wherein true wiſdome doth conſiſt. And that conſiſts chiefly in theſe two things. Firſt, in the knowledge of our ſelves; Secondly, in the knowledge of God; As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *I doubt not but I ſhall make thee know more fully what thou art, as alſo who God is.* And it plainly appeares in the cloſe, that *Job* got a fuller light in both by what *Elihu* ſaid to him. He got a fuller ſoul-ſight of the ſoveraignty and highneſſe of God, and a deeper humiliation in the ſight of his own ſinfullneſs and vileneſſe. He that hath learned and is in the power of theſe two leſſons, is queſtionleſs a wiſe man; and he that faithfully teacheth theſe two leſſons doth not at all overrate his doctrine if he call it wiſdome, nor doth he put too high a title upon his paines and endeavours, if he ſaith to his Auditors or Schollars, I will teach or have taught you wiſdome.

Laſtly, When *Elihu* ſaid, *I will teach thee wiſdome*; we muſt not conceive that he looked upon *Job* as unwiſe or ignorant; *Elihu* knew well enough he had not to doe with a child or an ideot, but with a man of knowledge, with a man who was *skilfull in the word of righteouſneſſe, whoſe ſenſes* (as the Apoſtle expreſſeth it, *Heb.* 5. 14.) *were exerciſed to diſcern both good and evill.* His meaning then, when he ſaid *I will teach thee wiſdome*, was only this, I will teach thee to be wiſer and more knowing in ſome neceſſary truths, then as yet thou art, or at leaſt, haſt appeared to be. Or we may give his ſence in the language of the Apoſtle, (2 *Cor.* 1. 24.) I will teach thee wiſdome, not as *having dominion over thy faith, but as a helper of thy joy.*

Hence note, Firſt.

There are none ſo wiſe, none ſo holy, but they may learne more wiſdome, to be yet more holy.

'Tis out of queſtion, he was never good, who thinks he can be no better; nor doth he yet know any thing aright, who ſaith he needs know no more. It is very ſad (which is the caſe of many, 2 *Tim.* 3. 7.) to be *ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth*: Yet they who (through grace) have been enabled to come to the knowledge of the truth muſt be ever learning; and the more any man doth know, the more he ſeeth his need, and the more willing he is, to be taught and know more. *The feare of God that is wiſdome*, ſaith *Job*, (Chap. 28. 28.) *and to depart from evill, is underſtanding*; and God teſtified of *Job* that *he feared him, and eſchewed evill*, in the firſt verſe of this Booke; now if ſo wiſe, ſo good a man as *Job* might learne wiſdome, let none think themſelves too wiſe or too good to learne.

Secondly, Note.

True wiſdome conſiſts in the true knowledge of our ſelves, and of God.

This was the theame or ſubject upon which *Elihu* inſiſted, he was not teaching *Job* humane, philoſophicall, or naturall wiſdome, but heavenly and divine wiſdome; the greateſt meere naturall Philoſophers in the world (which title founds them, *lovers of wiſdome*) were meere ſtrangers to that, which we call true wiſdom; and (as the Apoſtle chargeth them, *Rom.* 1. 21, 22.) *became vain in their imaginations, and their fooliſh heart was darkened, profeſſing themſelves to be wiſe, they became fools.*

Thirdly, Note.

There is nothing worth the learning or knowing, but that which makes us truly wiſe.

For that only ſheweth us the way to be truly happy. 'Tis our wiſdome to work for a right end, and that work can never attaine its end but by the choyce of right means. *Through deſire* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 18. 1.) *a man having ſeparated himſelf, ſeeketh and intermedleth with all wiſdome.* The deſire of all things (ſay Naturaliſts)

Naturaliſts) eſpecially of all men runs out to good. And the better any man is, the better is that good which he deſireth, yea if any man be truly good he deſireth that which is beſt; for the enjoyment of God wherein alone happineſſe doth conſiſt, is his ultimate and higheſt end. But what doth he to reach this end? *Solomon* poynts us to two things: Firſt, he ſeparateth himſelfe from all thoſe lets and impediments which ſtop up the way, or lye croſſe to his deſire. Secondly, *He ſeeketh and intermedleth with all wiſdome*, with all reall and ſubſtantiall wiſdome, (as the word there uſed ſignifieth) for he knoweth that nothing but ſuch wiſdome, acted in wiſe wayes, is proper and ſucceſſefull for the promoting of that noble end. Now if nothing but wiſdome can lead us to that end, what is there worth the learning or knowing except that which makes us wiſe?

Fourthly, From that frame of ſpirit which *Elihu* obſerved in *Job*,

Note.

They that are humble and meek are fitteſt to learne wiſdome.

God reſiſteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. (*Jam.* 4. 6.) The humble ſoule hath received grace already, and that grace received is the way to all grace. (*Pſal.* 25. 9.) *The meek will he guide in judgment, the meek will he teach his way.* The way of God is wiſdome, and they whom God teacheth ſhall undoubtedly learne it.

Laſtly.

To teach ſpirituall wiſdome, or to teach man how to be ſpiritually wiſe, is the beſt leſſon that can be taught.

They are bleſſed Maſters who make ſuch Schollars. The whole diſcourſe of *Elihu* is about ſpirituall wiſdome, not about the wiſdome of the world which God will deſtroy; not how to climbe the pinnacles of honour, and get high in the world, not how to gather riches, and to lade our ſelves with thick clay; it was not how to be great or rich, but it was how to be holy and humble, how to give glory to God, and be fitted for glory with God; theſe were the leſſons of wiſdome which *Elihu* taught *Job*, and

these are lessons chiefly to be taught and learned by every man, who undertakes to be a teacher, or desires to be a learner. Thus *Elihu* hath concluded his first discourse with a promise to teach *Job* wisdome, and how well he performed and made good his promise, will appeare, to his praise, in opening the following Chapters.

JOB,

JOB, Chap. 34. Vers. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Furthermore, Elihu answered and said.

Heare my words, O ye wise men, and give ear to me, ye that have knowledge.

For the ear tryeth words, as the mouth tasteth meat.

Let us chuse to us judgement: let us know among our selves what is good.

THe former Chapter concluded *Elihu's* first discourse with *Job:* and we may well suppose that he had made some pause; to try whether *Job* would give him an answer, as he had invited him to doe. But perceiving him silent, and forbearing to speak; he himselfe proceeds to this second speech.

In which we may consider:

First, His Preface, in the foure first verses.

Secondly, His charge or accusation brought against *Job*, from the 5th verse Inclusively to the 10th Exclusively.

Thirdly, We have the refutation of what *Job* said of himselfe, and seem'd to charge upon God; this is prosecuted with much variety from the 10th to the 30th verse of this Chapter.

In the foure last verses, *Elihu* gathers up the strength of all he had sayd, and makes his Conclusion.

The foure verses now under hand, are a Preface to this second undertaking of *Elihu* with *Job:* In which we have

First, His transition from what he had said, to what he was about to say, in the first verse; *Furthermore.*

Secondly, We have his address or application to those about him for audience and diligent attention to what he had to say,

in the 2d and 3d verses; *Heare O ye wise men*, &c.

Thirdly, We have his motion; and the motion which he makes, is, that the whole proceedure of the businesse might be both faire and friendly, as also judicious and just; or that they might to the utmost endeavour after a right understanding and discerning of the matter before them: *v.* 4. *Let us chuse to our selves judgement*, &c.

Vers. 1. *Furthermore, Elihu answered and said*, or, *and Elihu answered and said.*

It may here be questioned, by what propriety of speech it can be said that *Elihu* answered, seeing *Job* made no reply to what he had sayd before.

To this query, I say, First, that in Scripture both the beginning of a speech, and the continuance of it, where nothing hath been interposed, is called an answer; we find it so frequently in the Gospel (*Math:* 11. 25.) *Then Jesus answered and said*: there was no question, no discourse antecedent, yet it is called an answer. The like is observable in the 17th of *Mathew*, v. 4. and *John* 2. 18.

Secondly, We may resolve the doubt thus; though *Job* said nothing now to which *Elihu* made answer; yet he had said much which was yet unanswered, altogether unanswered by *Elihu*; therefore *Elihu* might say, that he proceeded to answer the many matters of *Jobs* former speech, to which as yet he had given no answer. This may suffice to shew how or why that which he sayd further, was an answer, let us now consider what *Elihu answered and said.*

Vers. 2. *Heare my words, O ye wise men, and give eare to me ye that have knowledge.*

As if he had said, I will not be my owne Judge in this matter, I referre it to the judgement of wise and knowing men, let them determine it.

We may here take notice; First, of the character given the persons to whom *Elihu* spake, or did address his speech, they were *wise men, men that had knowledge.*

Secondly, We may take notice of the earnestnes of his exhortation or admonition, to mind what he had to say, *Give ear,*

O

O ye wise men, O ye men that have knowledge.

For the clearing of these words, we must enquire, first, who is *a wise man?* who, *a man that hath knowledge? a wise man* in distinction to a man that hath knowledge, is a man of mature judgement, of cleare understanding, and solid prudence, in the managing either of discourses or actions. *A man of knowledge* is one that hath improved his understanding by study, reading, or long experience. Some men are wise, who yet have not much knowledge; and some have a great deale of knowledge, who have very little wisdome. Now *Elihu* speaks to his auditory, as consisting or made up both of wise and knowing men; *O ye wise men*, that have great understanding and judgement; and, *O ye men of knowledge*, that have attained to learning and skill in all things knowable, heare my words and give eare. Here was a choice and select auditory, wise men, and men of knowledge.

Secondly, It may be queried, whom *Elihu* intends by these wise men, and men that had knowledge?

Some conceive, he takes in all that were present at that long and solemn conference between *Job* and his friends; and that he deciphers the whole Company under these titles of wise and knowing men, inviting them all to attend what he had to say, they being so well fitted to judge what he had to say; *It is not good to give flattering titles to men, but it is good to give them winning titles, such as may gaine upon them for their good.*

Yet I rather conceive, that *Elihu* speakes more specially to some that were there present; namely, to *Jobs* three friends, who had had the matter in hand before, and now stood out: to these men he now turnes himselfe, and bends his discourse, saying, *Heare O ye wise men: hearken ye that have knowledge*; that is, ye *Eliphaz*, *Zophar*, and *Bildad*, who have all this while engaged with *Job*, give me leave to speake a few words in your eares, and I pray attend unto me.

Thirdly, Supposing that they, specially, were the wise and knowing men to whom he spake. It may be question'd againe, under what notion he called them wise and knowing men.

Some say, he called them so Ironically, putting a close or secret scorn upon them; As if he had sayd, *Heare me, O ye wise men, and hearken, O ye knowing men, ye that for years and age should be indeed knowing and wise men*; *and are so in the reputation*

of

of others, as well as by your owne profeſſion and pretention; Ye who came ſo farre to undertake this weighty worke, the comforting and counſelling of this your afflicted friend, ſee now how well you have acquitted your ſelves, and anſwered the expectation raiſed both of you and by you. Have ye not comforted him fairely, and counſelled him wiſely? Doe ye not ſee how ſhort you are of your owne propoſalls? and how ill you have handled the matter, he remaining as farre from conviction, ſatisfaction, or conſolation, as when you firſt began with him? Thus ſome carry the ſence, but I ſhall not ſtay upon it, nor doe I conceive that *Elihu* ſpake Ironically, but plainly, and in good earneſt, not only calling them wiſe and knowing men, but judging and believing they were ſo. Of theſe he beggs audience.

Heare and give eare.

To heare is a naturall act; a man that hath ears cannot chuſe but heare (unleſſe he ſtop them) when any thing is ſpoken: but *to give ear*, is, as I may ſay, an artificiall act, a ſtudyed act, yea a ſpirituall act, when the matter ſpoken of is ſpirituall. *Elihu* doth not call for a bare hearing of words, but for a ſtudious hearing of the matter which ſhould be preſented to them; *heare and give eare*; or as the Elegancy of the Hebrew may be rendred, *ear my words*: for the word which we render to *give eare*, ſignifies alſo *the ear, ear my words*. We ſay of a thing that we deſire another would reach to us, *pray hand it hither*, putting the denomination of the Organ or Inſtrument upon the act; ſo by a like Elegancy, it is here ſayd, *Ear my words*; that is, heare ſtudiouſly and diligently, with an holy art and skill. As there is an art in ſpeaking, ſo there is a great, if not a greater art in hearing; *ear my words*, or, *give eare to me ye men that have knowledge.*

From the Conſideration of the parties here ſpoken to, wiſe and knowing men.

Note.

The wiſe, and knowing, are to heare as well as ſpeake.

They that are wiſe, need more wiſdome, and they that are knowing, may improve their knowledge by hearing; They who know many, yea moſt truths, may yet know more truths; and if any know all truths, they may yet know every truth more. This

JNR eſt auribus percipere ſive auriçare, ſi fas eſſet ita loqui. Rab: Mord.

Et quia auribus velut brachijs ſtateræ ponderantur quæ audivimus, ipſæ bilances eodem quo aures nomine JNR *appellantur. Et verbum audiendi ponderare ſignificat.* Bold:

cauſed

the Apoſtle to profeſſe (*2 Pet: 1. 12.*) *I will not be negligent to put you alwayes in remembrance of theſe things, though ye know them, and be eſtabliſhed in the preſent truth.* As the ignorant ought to heare that they may know, ſo they who have knowledge, ought to heare, that they may be more knowing; as they that are fooles, ought to heare that they may be wiſe; ſo they that are wiſe ought to heare that they may be yet wiſer. (*Pro: 1. 5.*) *A wiſe man will heare, and will encreaſe learning. Solomon* having ſayd in the former verſe, that he ſpake theſe Proverbs, *To give ſubtlety to the ſimple, to the young men knowledge and diſcretion*; leſt any ſhould ſay, if your Proverbs or wiſe ſentences are ſo plaine and eaſie, that the ſimple may found them, and young men comprehend them, then what profit ſhall wiſe and learned men get by reading or hearing them? ſhall not they looſe their labour and miſ-pend their time in the ſtudy of them? No, ſaith he, the greateſt Clerkes and ripeſt wits may gather inſtruction from them, as well as the ſimple vulgar, and greener heads. Their depth will not drowne a lambe, and they are deep enough to ſwim a Leviathan. And therefore as a wiſe man will heare, that is, is willing to heare, that he may encreaſe learning; ſo let not the wiſeſt thinke themſelves too wiſe to heare, for they may encreaſe their learning, how learned ſoever they are. And as the wiſeſt may learne every day, ſo they that are truely wiſe, doe learne every hearing day, as the ſame *Solomon* tells us (*Prov: 9. 8.*) *Give inſtruction to a wiſe man, and he will be yet wiſer.* They are the moſt fooliſh of all men, who thinke themſelves ſo wiſe that they need no more inſtruction, and ſo knowing that they need learn no more knowledge. The word of God it is fitted for all ſorts and ſizes of men, it is for the ignorant, and for the knowing; it is for the fooliſh, and for the wiſe; it is milke for babes, and ſtrong meate for men; it is for them that are out of the Church to bring them in, and for thoſe that are within the Church to build them up (*Eph: 4. 13.*) *Till we all come unto a perfect man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt*; till we are wiſe and knowing to perfection, and fullneſs of ſtature (which will not be on this ſide glory) we have need to give eare, and heare, for the perfecting of our knowledge, and the hightning of our ſtature.

Sapientum eſt velle diſcere.

Againe, Theſe wiſe men were called to heare and give eare,

not

not only that they might learn and encreaſe knowledge by what was ſpoken, but to judge aright of what was ſpoken; for this was not ſo much the hearing of a Sermon (as I may ſay) as of a diſpute, or the debate of a Controverſie; and therefore wiſe men were deſired to heare it, that they might be able to judge, and give their opinion, (as 'tis ſayd in the 4th verſe) *Let us chuſe to our ſelves judgement, and know among our ſelves what is good.*

Hence note, Secondly.

We had need to heare and give eare, or to heare diligently, before we judge either of things or perſons.

Though we may judge rightly of that we have not heard, or of that which we have heard ſlightly, yet we are not right Judges of any matter till we have heard it. 'Tis poſſible to hit upon a right judgement blind-fold; but Judges muſt not be blind, nor judge blind-fold. To judge right, not knowing it to be ſo, ſhall have no better reward then a wrong judgement. Yea they that are called to judge, muſt both heare and give eare, elſe they may quickly give wrong judgement.

Againe, *Elihu* is ſpeaking here to wiſe and good men, yet how ſtrictly doth he exhort them? *Heare and give eare.*

Hence note.

Good men are often dull of hearing, and had need to be put forward.

Chriſt tells his Diſciples that many are judicially ſo, and we know that all are naturally ſo (*Math:* 13. 15.) and the Apoſtle tells the *Hebrewes* they were ſo (*Chap:* 5. 11.) where treating of *Chriſt called of God, an high Prieſt after the order of Melchiſedeck*, he concludeth, *of whom we have many things to ſay, and hard to be uttered, ſeeing ye are dull of hearing.* But how did their dullneſs of hearing make thoſe things hard to be ſpoken or uttered? may it not be eaſie enough for a man to utter that which others are dull to heare? I anſwer, the Apoſtles meaning ſeemes to be this? It was hard for him to utter or expound them ſo, as they might perceive the cleare truth of thoſe great myſteries, becauſe their internal eare, or apprehending faculty was weake and dull. There is a ſtople in the eare of man, and 'tis hard to pull it out. When any one ſpeakes to purpoſe, 'tis the duty of thoſe that are preſent

preſent to heare: and yet he that ſpeakes had need to invite and preſſe all to heare, yea to heare and give eare. The words of the wiſe are goads to provoke and pricke us on to heare the truth, as well as nayles to faſten it (*Eccl:* 12. 11.) *Elihu* having called wiſe men to heare or eare his words, ſheweth the uſe or force of the eare in the next verſe.

Verſ. 3. *For the ear tryeth words, as the mouth taſteth meat.*

In this verſe *Elihu* gives the reaſon why he ſo earneſtly exhorted them to heare and give ear; *The ear tryeth words*, that is, by the hearing of the ear, words are tryed. It is the office of the eare to conveigh words to the underſtanding, that ſo a judgement may be made of them, before they are either received or rejected.

The word which we tranſlate *to try*, ſignifies to try as gold is tryed in the fire: the eare is, as it were, a furnace wherein words are tryed, the ear will diſcover whether what is ſayd be droſs or pure mettal. The Prophet (*Zach:* 13. 9.) ſpeaketh of a *third part* of men that ſhould be brought thorow the fire and tryed; as the fire of affliction and perſecution tryeth perſons, ſo man hath a fire and a touchſtone in his eare which tryeth words. The ear is given not only to heare a ſound of words, not only to underſtand the general meaning of words what they ſignifie in any language, but the eare is given to try the ſenſe and ſoundneſs of words. And when *Elihu* ſaith *words*, ſpeaking indefinitely, he includeth all words of one ſort or other; it tryeth good words, and it tryeth bad words; it tryeth heavenly words, and it tryeth earthly words; it tryeth naturall words, and it tryeth ſpirituall words, the truth or falſhood of words are brought to tryall, at the barre and tribunall of the eare. But in what manner or after what ſimilitude doth the eare try words? The anſwer followeth.

בחן *periculit probavit.* *fecit,*

as the mouth taſteth meat.

In the 12th Chapter we had the ſame expreſſion, and therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it here. Only there the ſentence is made up by a particle Copulative; *The ear tryeth words, and the mouth taſteth meat.* Here by a particle of likeneſs; *The eare tryeth words, as the mouth taſteth meat.* There is a faire analogy or pro-

proportion, between the eare and the mouth, in diſcriminating their proper obiects. Hearing and taſting, are two of thoſe five excellent uſefull ſenſes which God hath planted in the nature of man, the other three are ſeeing, ſmelling, feeling. Here we have a compariſon between two of the five ſenſes; look what the mouth is to meat, the ſame is the ear to words. In the mouth the ſenſe of taſting is placed as a Judge to diſcerne between good and bad, ſavory and unſavory meates; and the eare of a man which receiveth words, is accompanied with an underſtanding, whereby we apprehend what is true, what is falſe, what is to be approved, and what refuſed. And the compariſon runs yet more clearely, while we conſider, that as the food which the mouth receiveth is prepared for the helpe of our natural or bodily life, ſo the words of inſtruction which the eare receiveth are prepared for the food of our ſoules, and the maintaining of our ſpirituall life.

Some conceive the compariſon is not here made between the two ſenſes of taſting and hearing, but that both are compared to thoſe wiſe and knowing men ſpoken of, and to whom appeale is made in the former verſe. For as all the ſenſes are not fitted to judge of words and meates, but only the eare and palate; ſo all men are not fit nor capable to judge of weighty matters and profound queſtions, but only wiſe and knowing men. And ſo according to this interpretation, both or either of theſe ſenſitive faculties, and both or either of their properties, are alike compared to wiſe and learned men, who are able not only to underſtand the ſound of words, but alſo exerciſe a judgement upon them, both to diſcerne and determine what there is of truth and right in them. Hence that ſaying of the Ancient, *Wiſdome is a ſavory knowledge.* Wiſe men taſt and ſavour the things which they know. He ſurely was a wiſe man who ſayd of the word of God (*Jer.* 15. 16.) *Thy words were found, and I did eate them, and thy word was to me the joy and rejoycing of my heart. Heare, O ye wiſe men, and give eare to me ye that have knowledge; the ear tryeth words, as the mouth taſteth meat*; that is, as the ear of a man tryeth words, and as the mouth of a man doth taſt meat; ſo wiſe and knowing men try and taſt that which is ſpoken and heard. Thus both theſe ſenſitive faculties, their properties and powers are compared to wiſe men, who doe not only heare the voyce of him that ſpeaketh, but ſit downe to conſider it. The mouth having taken meat and chawed

Sapientia eſt ſapida ſcientia.

chawed it, taſts it, and makes a judgement of it; Thus wiſe men deal with all they hear; ſo that, look what theſe two naturall faculties doe with naturall things; with words naturally ſpoken, with meat naturally eaten; the ſame, they who are wiſe and knowing do to what is ſpoken ſpiritually and rationally, they try and judge it.

But I conceive, we need not inſiſt ſtrictly upon this; For whether we compare theſe two ſenſes in their ſeverall operations to wiſe men, or whether we compare them in their operations one with another, yet (according to the ſenſe of our tranſlation) the meaning of *Elihu* is the ſame, namely, that thoſe wiſe men to whom he ſpake, ſhould not only hear but try what they heard, becauſe they had received a power ſo to do *for the ear tryeth words, even as the mouth taſteth meat.*

There is a twofold eare, there is an outward eare, and an inward eare: And ſo a twofold tryall: The outward eare tryeth words of what ſignification they are, whether they are as we ſay good Engliſh, or Latine, &c. It tryeth them alſo as to their grammaticall ſenſe, or the conſtruction of what is ſpoken in the letter. The inward eare or underſtanding tryeth them as to their logicall ſenſe, ſcope and tendency, as to their uſe, and force in the matter they are ſpoken to. Both wayes *the eare tryeth words, as the mouth taſteth meate*; only with this difference, that the tryall which the mouth makes is merely ſenſitive, and both begun and perfected in the mouth; but the tryall which the ear makes is chiefly intellectuall, it is begun at the ear, but perfected by the underſtanding. It is the mind which judgeth, the eare only brings in the report of things to the mind.

Auris interna dicitur vis, quæ vox alibi legitur in Græca editione pro vi, cum ſit ipſa mens, quæ verba et res dijudicat. Druſ.

Hence Note

First, *The ſenſe of hearing is a great mercy, and of great uſe to mankind.*

The eare is the chiefe Gate or inlet to the ſoul; nor were our eares given only for an Ornament to the head, but for the enriching and bettering of the heart. The naturally rationall eare given to heare and try words is a mercy; but when a ſpiritually rationall ear is given with it to heare and try words, that's a mercy indeed. *Solomon* ſaith (*Prov.* 20. 12.) *The hearing eare, and the ſeeing eye, the Lord hath made even both of them.* Theſe naturall ſenſes are of Gods own creation, and the uſe of them his bleſſing, yet

Aurem audientem dicit auditorem verbi obedientem. Beda.

yet common to all mankind good and bad; but the ſpirituall ſenſes of ſeeing and hearing, are a ſpeciall priviledge promiſed to the elect, and a fruit of Goſpel grace. (*Iſa.* 35. 5.) *Then the eyes of the blind ſhall be opened, and the eares of the deafe ſhall be unſtopped.* He meaneth it not either only or chiefly of the bodily eyes and eares (though Chriſt wrought miracles upon them, and healed both the blind and deafe in the dayes of his fleſh) but of the eyes and eares of the ſoul, which are often darke and ſtopt while the other are free enough in the exercise of their ſeverall faculties. The ſeeing eye, which both *Solomon* and *Iſaiah* intend, is the eye which ſo ſeeth as that it followeth the good which it ſeeth; and that's their hearing eare which beleeveth and obeyeth what it heareth. A ſuperficiall ſeeing eye is a blind eye, and a formall hearing eare is a deafe eare in the ſight and account of God. We ſay it is the ſymptome of ſome diſtemper or growing diſeaſe upon the body, when the pallate doth not reliſh meate; Surely it argueth a diſeaſed and ſick ſoul, when we have no mind to heare nor find reliſh in the word of God.

Secondly, Note.

Words are not to be received nor ſubmitted to, nor beleeved as true, till they are tryed.

Itching eares are bad, (2 Tim. 4. 3.) *Trying eares are good.* You will not ſwallow your meat till you have chewed and taſted it; nor ſhould you ſwallow words, till you have tryed them; why elſe have we eares to heare? why are we truſted with reaſon to judge things with? or with rules to judge them by? There is no greater Tyranny in the World, then to command a man to beleeve (by an implicit faith) as others beleeve; or to impoſe our opinions and aſſertions upon thoſe that hear them, and not to give them liberty to try them. This is to be at once (as the Apoſtle *James* expreſſeth it, (*Chap.* 3. 1.) *many Maſters*, or many Maſters where we ſhould not be one.

But ſome will ſay, when the Word of God is preached, is that to be tryed by men? have we a liberty to take that into conſideration or to take and refuſe it as we are perſwaded in our own judgments?

I anſwer, The word of God is not to be brought to the barre nor to be tryed by man. The word of God is our Judge, therefore ought not to be judged by us; the word of God is perfect, and how can we that are imperfect judge that which is perfect. The word of God is truth, and all men are lyars; we are not therefore to judge the word of God, nor try that: Yet when any man ſpeaks of or from the word of God, we are to try what he ſpeakes; that is, whether what he ſpeaks be according to the word of God, and his doctrine or interpretation grounded on the Text. Every one that ſpeakes about ſpirituall things profeſſeth he brings the word of God, and it muſt be tryed whether he doth ſo or no. It is a truth to which all are to ſubmit (without diſpute) by beleeving that *Jeſus Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinners, to waſh away their ſins with his blood.* This is the word of God: yet when this truth is Preached, we may conſider whether it be mannaged according to the word of God or no. This great doctrine, which containes the ſumme of the Goſpel, may have ſuch things mingled with it, as are not to be received for the word of God. Some in the primitive time thought and taught that there was no ſalvation by Chriſt unleſſe they ſtill kept the ceremoniall Law and were circumciſed; though they held that fundamentall truth, that Chriſt dyed to ſave ſinners; yet when they came to the explication of it, they deſtroyed it by urging a neceſſity of continuing the ceremoniall Law: whereas others judged rightly that faith only, without the uſe of any Jewiſh ceremony, purifieth the heart. Therefore a counſell of ſpirituall and godly wiſe men was called *to conſider of this matter.* (*Acts* 15. 6.) What to doe? not to try the Word of God, but to try which of thoſe two different opinions was according to the Word of God. Thus when we hear a Sermon, though the Word of God and Chriſt crucified be the generall ſubject of it, and that is not to be tryed, but received by faith and obeyed; yet what is ſpoken upon it and delivered about it as the mind of God in the Scripture, that is to be tryed. (1 *Cor.* 2. 15.) *He that is ſpirituall, tryeth, or judgeth all things.* And againe (1 *Cor.* 14. 29.) the Apoſtle gives this counſell about propheſying, *Let one or two ſpeak, and let the others judge*; what? the Word of God, no! but whether they ſpeake according to the word of God, or no; In this ſenſe every one muſt judg for himſelfe, we muſt not take all for granted, but try what we heare by the eare, as we doe what we eat by the mouth.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Note.

A ſpiritually judicious and conſiderate man will take time to judge of things that are ſpoken, as the pallate doth of meates that are eaten.

The eare tryeth words as the mouth taſteth meat; God hath given man a faculty for that end, and he is to uſe his faculty. We commonly ſay, *Look before you leape.* Surely then we ſhould taſt before we eate, and prove all things whether they are good or no, before we (electively) hold that which is good. (1 *Theſ.* 5. 21.) *The noble Bereans received the word with all readineſſe of mind*; yet they would make no more haſt then good ſpeed to receive it, for (as the Text ſaith, *Acts* 17. 11.) *They ſearched the Scriptures dayly whether thoſe things were ſo.*

Fourthly, Here are two Organs of ſenſe ſpoken of, *the ear* and *the mouth*, both are of great uſe to man, but one of them, *the eare* is of a more frequent and noble uſe. Beaſts have both mouths and eares; but becauſe theirs is only a ſenſitive life, they make more uſe of their mouths then of their eares. Whereas man whoſe life is rationall, yea and ſpirituall too, muſt or ought to make more uſe of his eares then of his mouth.

How doth this reprove all thoſe who are more in trying meats, then in trying words? or more for taſting, then they are for hearing? It was a complaint of ſome in the former age, that they made themſelves like bruit beaſts, which having both thoſe powers of hearing and taſting, have yet no regard to hearing, but are all for feeding and eating. They carry it like beaſts, and are more bruitiſh then a beaſt, who employ their mouths more then their eares. A beaſt is made in that low forme, to live to eat, and worke, and ſo to dye; man is of a higher forme, next to that of Angells, and for him to ſpend his time in eating and drinking, as if his worke lay at his mouth, not at his ear, is to degrade himſelf and lead a bruitiſh life. The Apoſtle brings in ſuch bruits ſpeaking thus, (1 *Cor.* 15. 32.) *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we ſhall dye*; not a word of uſing their eares: they ſay not, come let us hear the word of God, let us ſeek bread for our ſoules, but come, let us eat and drink; now for a man to be ſo much in eating, as to neglect hearing and meditating, what doth he but make himſelfe like a beaſt of the earth, who ſhould be like the Angells

Angells in Heaven, dayly riſing up to a ſpirituall and heavenly life; God lifts us up to Heaven (as I may ſay) *by the eares.* Our eares were not given us only to heare delightfull ſounds, or to commune one with another about the affaires of this life; the uſe of the eare is yet more noble, even to helpe us in the receiving of all ſaving and ſanctifying knowledge. *Faith comes by hearing,* (Rom. 15. 17.) and ſo doth every grace, both as to the implantation and growth of it, till we come to glory. Therefore conſider how you uſe this excellent ſenſe of hearing, and how you improve in ſpirituals by what you have heard. We were made after the Image of God in knowledge and righteouſneſſe, and it ſhould be the great deſigne of our lives to get this image renewed; and that is done at the eare, 'tis wrought by hearing; faith, repentance, and every grace come in and are wrought at the eare. Some ſcoffe at this latter age, calling it *a hearing age, not a working age*; we (ſay they) are much for *ear-work*, little for *hand-work*; all for Preaching, nothing for doing; nor can this reproach be quite wiped off, ſeeing with our plenty of Preaching, there is ſo little practiſing; as if men had turned all the members of their body into eares, and were nothing but hearing: To doe nothing but heare, or to heare and doe nothing, to heare much and act little, is a high provocation. To have a ſwel'd head and a feeble hand is the diſeaſe of Religion. Yet let not voluptuous Epicures who are all for the palate and belly-cheere think to excuſe themſelves, for not hearing, or for ſeldome hearing, becauſe ſome who hear much are found doing little, or ſeldome do what they hear: for as theſe ſhall be condemned by the word which they have heard and not done, ſo ſhall theſe for not hearing the word which would have ſhewed them what to doe. It hath been anciently ſaid, *The belly hath no eares*, nor will they either mind hearing, or mind what they hear, who mind their bellyes (not for hunger and the ſupport of nature, that is (as *Solomon* ſpeaks (*Eccleſ.* 10. 17.) for ſtrength but) for drunkenneſſe or ſurfet. When a voluptuous perſon deſired *Cato* that he might live with him: No, ſaid *Cato*, I like not your ſociety, I doe not love to converſe with a man who uſeth his mouth more then his eares; who is buſied more to pleaſe his taſt in eating and drinking, then to enrich his underſtanding by hearing and diſcourſing. The Apoſtle (*Tit.* 1. 12. referring them to one of their own Poets) calleth the *Cretians evill*

Cum ea vivere non poſſum cui palatum magis ſapiat quam cor. Plutarchus in vita Catonis.

evill beaſts, ſlow bellies. They were not ſlow to fill their bellyes, but their full bellyes (their *belly being their God*, as he told ſome among the *Philippians*, Chap. 3. 19.) made them ſlow, yea reprobate to every good word and worke. *Solomon* gives man a great charge when he ſaith (*Prov.* 23. 23.) *Buy truth, and ſell it not.* The mart for thoſe moſt precious commodities grace and truth, is kept (not at the belly, but) at the eare; there we buy *without money, and without price* both grace and truth; to get theſe is to be wiſe merchants. The beſt market we can make, the beſt trade we can drive is with and at our eares: *The eare tryeth words, as the mouth taſteth meat.* And from this *Elihu* infers

Verſ. 4. *Let us chuſe to our ſelves judgment; let us know among our ſelves what is good.*

This verſe containes the ſecond requeſt which *Elihu* made to *Jobs* friends; The ſumme of it is, that they might proceed judiciouſly and fairly in the cauſe before them. As if he had ſaid, *Seeing it is the office of the eare to try words, as the mouth taſteth meat; let us ſee what we can do with our eares towards the determination of this matter. Job hath often wiſhed to find one with whom he might debate and try this cauſe in judgment; let us give him his wiſh, and having throughly weighed the matter and merits of his cauſe, let us ſee what juſtice will award him. Let us chuſe to our ſelves judgment*, &c.

Let us chuſe.

To elect or chuſe is the worke of the will. And to chuſe what is good, what is right, is a gracious work of a renewed will; as Gods Election of us from Eternity, ſo our Election of God and the things of God at any time, is a very gracious worke.

This affirmative act, To chuſe to us judgement, ſeemes to imply a negative, the rejecting or laying aſide of whatſoever is contrary to or a hindrance of Judgement; that is, the laying aſide, Firſt, of all animoſities or undue heates of ſpirit; Secondly, of all prejudices and undue prepoſſeſſions; Thirdly, of all groundleſſe ſuſpitions and jealouſies of the perſon we have to deale with, we can never chuſe judgement, till we are cleare of all theſe.

The original word rendred to chuſe, ſignifies in the noune, *a young*

young man, a man in the flower of his age, in the beſt of his life, when his breaſts (as *Job* ſpake at the twentieth Chapter) are full of milke, and his bones of marrow; and the reaſon is given, becauſe our younger time is our chuſing time, as to our way in this world; it ſhould be ſo much more for heaven, or the things of another world. *Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth*, ſaith *Solomon* (Eccl: 12.1.) Some render thoſe words expreſſely, *In the dayes of thy elections or chuſings*; As if he had ſayd, Remember to chuſe God in thy chuſing dayes, when thou chuſeſt thy calling in which to live, when thou chuſeſt a wife, with whom to ſpend thy life, then be ſure and remember above all things to chuſe God. When *Moſes* was a young man, he was famous for this Choice (*Heb:* 11. 25, 26.) *He choſe the reproach of Chriſt rather then the riches of Egypt*; when he had all the riches and honours of *Egypt* preſented to him, and courting him on the one ſide, and the reproach of Chriſt, affliction, poverty, diſgrace, threatning him on the other ſide, he choſe theſe rather; who would thinke that man wiſe who ſhould chuſe the reproach of Chriſt (in appearance nothing but dirt and droſs) before the riches of *Egypt*? yet *Moſes* never ſhewed his wiſdome and learning ſo much in all the learning of the *Egyptians*, as he did in that Choice.

In diebus electionum tuarum. Mont:

Let us chuſe Judgement.

Judgement may be taken two wayes; Firſt, for the act of enquiry, let us diſcourſe and debate this matter, to find out what is juſt; Judgement is the reſult or ſentence given upon hearing and debate. And moſt properly a right ſentence is Judgement; and that by Judgement *Elihu* meanes a right ſentence, appeares clearely from the next words.

Judicium eſt cauſæ inquiſitio. Judicium pro æquo. Merc.

And let us know among our ſelves what is good.

Let us know, that is, let us ſo try by the ear what ſhall be ſpoken, that we may come to a right knowledge, to a right guſt or taſt of what is good. There is a two-fold knowledge; Firſt, of ſimple intelligence, when we know any thing as it is preciſely in its owne nature, true or falſe, good or evill; Secondly, of approbation, when we conclude what we know, to be true or good. We may take in both here, eſpecially the latter; It being (doubtleſſe)

Communis hic ſit nobis propoſitus ſcopus, ut accurata judicij lance quæ hactenus in hac cauſa dicta ſunt probemus, & quod optimum eſt approbemus. Scult:

leſſe) the deſire of *Elihu* to find truth and goodneſs (if it were to be found) on *Jobs* ſide.

And when he ſaith, *That we may know what is good*; we may underſtand it either Comparatively or Poſitively; *that we may know what is good*; is, firſt, that we may know good from evill; Secondly, that we may know among good things, what is better, yea what is beſt; let us not only diſtinguiſh between good and bad, but between good and better, better and beſt. The reaſon of man is able to put a difference not only between wheat and tares, but if you bring him ſeverall ſamples of wheat, or other graine, he is able to judge which is the better, which is beſt; a knowing man will judge to two pence in a buſhell which is beſt; ſo in all other commodities we not only judge between that which is good, and that which is ſtark nought, but when we have many parcels and particulars of any kinde before us good and uſefull, we judge which is the beſt, which the principall.

Thus in ſpiritualls, we are not only to judge of things ſo farre as to know good from evill (which yet is a very good piece of knowledge; for many put *darkneſs for light, and light for darkneſs; bitter for ſweet, and ſweet for bitter*, as the Prophet complained (*Iſa:* 5. 20.) that is, they huddle all things together in a Chaos of confuſion) but it ſhould be our care to know good from good, yea to know what excells among things that are excellent. 'Tis well when we know truth from falſhood, but we ſhould labour to know which among truths is the moſt precious truth. *Paul* having ſpoken of what was good, yea of the beſt gifts, ſaith, *Yet I will ſhew you a more excellent way* (1 Cor: 12. 31.) As if he had ſayd ſayd, This is a good way you are in, the exerciſe of the beſt gifts, but here's a more excellent way, the exerciſe of grace. Thus here I take good, not ſo much Poſitively as Comparatively, *Let us know what is good*, that is, what is beſt, and what is beſt of all.

Let us chuſe to our ſelves Judgement: and know among our ſelves that which is good.

Firſt, In that he ſaith, *Let us chuſe to our ſelves Judgement.*

Obſerve.

We muſt conſider deliberately and maturely before we paſs Judgement.

Judgement

Judgement is a choice thing, and muſt be made upon choyce; it is not to be ſnatched up haſtily, but duely choſen. They that are upon the choyce either of things or perſons, ſhould be much in Conſideration. How uncomely (beſides unrighteous) is it, to judge men or matters raſhly, to be hurried on to election with paſſion, or to judge upon heare-ſayes and Conjectures? This is not to chuſe Judgement, but to ſnatch it up; to chuſe Judgement is to doe it with mature deliberation; there muſt be much weighing, elſe properly no judging; raſh judgement is uſually wrong judgement; and that layeth us open to another judgement, *Judge not that ye be not judged*, is Chriſts warning (*Math:* 7. 1.) that is, doe not judge haſtily, or harſhly, doe not judge raſhly nor rigidly, much leſſe falſely, for if you do you ſhall be judged righteouſly (indeed) as to your caſe, but not comfortably as to your condition. They who will not chuſe Judgement, doe, in the iſſue, chuſe Judgement, that is, not uſing deliberation in Judgement, they draw deſervedly upon themſelves a judgement of condemnation.

Secondly, Taking it more generally, *Let us chuſe to our ſelves Judgement*, or that which is right.

Note.

It is not enough for us to doe Judgement, or that which is right, but we muſt chuſe it.

'Tis a worke of no acceptation with God to doe that which is juſt, unleſſe we chuſe it as wel as doe it, that is, unleſſe our hearts cloſe with it, and pitch upon it. *Solomon* (Prov: 1. 29.) chargeth the ſimple for not chuſing what was good; *they did not chuſe the feare of the Lord.* By the feare of the Lord, he meane the true worſhip of the Lord, or any worke of obedience, by which we teſtifie a holy feare of him; poſſibly they might doe the feare of the Lord; poſſibly they worſhipped the Lord, they prayed to him, and heard his word, but they did not chuſe the feare of the Lord; they did not ſit downe and judge that beſt, or moſt neceſſary, but tooke it up by accident, or by cuſtome, or for company, becauſe they ſaw others doe it. It will not turne to our account to be found doing good, unleſſe we chuſe to our ſelves that which is good. *Our elections are more eyed by God, then our actions, and the ſetting of our hearts, then the work of our hands.*

Thirdly,

Thirdly, From the latter branch, *Let us know among our selves what is good.*

Note.

First, *There's nothing worth our knowing, but that which is good.*

Whatsoever hath a morall, or a spirituall good in it, is worthy to be knowne; the truths, the workes, the wayes of God, are the most desireable good things to be studied and knowne (*Psal:* 4. 6.) *There are many will say, who will shew us any good?* What's their good? Corne, wine, oyle, gold, silver, houses, lands, &c. these are their good, and these are all their good; but though a godly man knoweth that these are good things, and blesseth God for any portion in them; yet that which he call's *his good, and the good*, is of a higher nature; We commonly call worldly things *our goods*, but we mis-call them if we call them *our good*. The Favour of God is our good, grace is our good, faith and love and hope and righteousnesse are good above all, God himselfe is good, and to know and enjoy him in Christ through the Spirit is our chiefest good here, and will be all our good hereafter. *Let us know what is good.*

From the Comparative sense of the words, *Let us know what is good*, that is, if there be a better to be had let us know that.

Observe.

It is not enough for us to have the knowledge of good things, but among good things the best are to be sought out, to be knowne, and attained to.

This was a speciall branch of the Apostles prayer for the *Philippians* (Phil: 1. 10.) *That ye may approve the things that are excellent*; or the things that differ in excellency; Some are contented to sit downe in the lowest forme of Christs Schoole; if they have but any thing which they may call good, or true, right and sincere, they looke no further; any thing satisfieth them, which will serve turne to keep them from perishing; they have no holy aspirings, nor godly covetous desires after the best things, and the best of the best. God is willing and hath promised to give us not only good things, but the best things (*Psal:* 81. 16.) *He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat,* and

and *with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee*; 'tis a mercy to have wheat, but the finest of the wheat, and honey out of the rock, not ordinary honey, but the best honey, the purest honey, are greater mercies. We, by our sins, deserve that *God should* (as the Prophet speakes, *Isa:* 30. 20.) *give us the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction*; that is, either that he should give us adversity in stead of bread, and affliction in stead of water, or that he should feed us with the coursest bread, with huskes and bran, and give us bitter waters, the waters of *Marah* to drinke, yet he in mercy gives us pleasant bread, and wel-tasted water; yea were we better, he would give us the best bread, the finest of the wheat, and our cup should be sweeter to us then the sweetest honey. *The reason why we have not of the best, is because we are no better.* Yea God now gives us not only good things, but the best of good things, even himselfe, his Son and Spirit, who are best of all (O how excellent is this loving kindnes!) therefore let us not only look after good things, but the best of good things, to honour God, and lift up his name to the highest in this world; Let us labour to know and doe the best things; and give God our best services and purest praises, even the male of our flocke, the first-borne, the strength of our whole soules. To these highest attainments, *Elihu* perswades those wise and knowing men, promising to joyne with them in that search; Come let us beat out the business with diligence, that we may at last chuse Judgement, and know among our selves what is good, what is best.

JOB,

JOB. Chap. 34. Verſ. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

For Job hath ſaid, I am righteous: and God hath taken away my Judgement.

Should I lie againſt my right? my wound is incurable without tranſgreſſion.

What man is like Job, who drinketh up ſcorning like water?

Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.

For he hath ſaid, It profiteth a man nothing, that he ſhould delight himſelfe with God.

THe Preface hath been diſpatcht; the context of theſe five verſes containes the whole charge, or bill of complaint, drawne up by *Elihu* againſt *Job*, conſiſting of many particulars. This charge is double; The firſt part whereof is contained in the 5th and 6th verſes; the ſecond in the 7th 8th and 9th verſes. In the firſt charge he alledgeth foure things againſt *Job*; two in the 5th verſe, and two in the 6th; The two things alledged againſt him in the 5th verſe are.

Firſt, That *Job* inſiſted too much upon his owne righteouſneſs, *Job hath ſaid, I am righteous.*

Secondly, That he reflected too boldly upon the righteouſneſs of God, yea that upon the matter, he had accuſed God of unrighteouſneſs, or injuſtice, *God hath taken away my Judgement.*

Verſ. 5. *For Job hath ſaid, I am righteous.*

That's the firſt charge, *Job hath ſaid*; *Elihu* gathers up, and collects thoſe paſſages of *Jobs* complaint, which he found moſt faulty, and layeth them (as we ſay) in his diſh; *Job hath ſaid*; we may well remember, and he cannot deny it, for he hath ſaid it, not once only, but often, not lightly, but ſeriouſly and aſſertingly, *I am juſt, or righteous*; that is, *I have ſufficiently ſhewed my innocency, and the equity of my cauſe, but I am not permitted to declare and*

and hold it forth in ſuch a way as I would, before my Judge; yea the Lord proceedeth with me, not in the ordinary way of Juſtice, but, being above law, afflicts me, at his pleaſure, though I am innocent. This is the ſumme of what *Job* ſaid, as often as he hath ſayd, *I am righteous.*

The firſt particle which we render *for*, imports, the cleareneſs and truth of the charge; there is no avoyding the matter of fact; It will fall upon him, let him take it off and anſwer it if he can, or as wel as he can. *For Job hath ſaid, I am righteous.*

But it may be queſtioned, where ſaid he this?

For anſwer, I ſhall doe two things.

Firſt, Shew from what paſſages in *Jobs* former anſwers this charge may be made good, or at leaſt made up.

Secondly, I ſhall ſhew in what ſence *Job* ſaid this, and how *Elihu* and *Job* doe either agree, or differ in the thing.

To the firſt, where ſaid *Job, I am righteous?*

I anſwer; We find not this direct aſſertion in termes, or in ſo many words, but what he ſpake in ſeverall places amounts to it; (*Chap:* 13. 18.) *Behold, now I have ordered my cauſe, I know I ſhall be juſtified,* (Chap: 23. 10.) *But he knoweth the way that I take, when he hath tryed me, I ſhall come forth as gold.* (Chap: 27. 6.) *My righteouſneſs I hold faſt, and will not let it goe*; and he inſiſted at large upon this poynt, his vindication from all unrighteouſneſs throughout the whole 31th Chapter. There we find him making frequent imprecations (*v.* 5, 6, 7.) *If I have walked with vanitie, or if my foot hath haſted to deceit; Let me be weighed in an even ballance, that God may know mine integrity; If my ſtep hath turned out of the way, and mine heart walked after mine eyes, and if any blot hath cleaved to mine hands, then* &c. In all which and many other paſſages of that Chapter, *Job* ſpake highly of his owne innocency, and ſaid in effect, *I am righteous.* His other friends had taken notice of this before: *Eliphaz* hit him with it (*Chap:* 4. 17.) while he put thoſe queſtions; *Shall mortall man be more juſt then God? ſhall a man be more pure then his maker?* And ſo did *Bildad* (Chap: 8. 6.) *If thou wert pure and upright, ſurely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteouſneſs proſperous.* Nor was *Zophar* behind with him (*Chap:* 11. 4.) *Thou haſt ſayd, my doctrine is pure, I am cleane in thine eyes.*

Vocabulum כי *quia certitudinem et firmam aſſeverationem hic importat* q.d. *profecto equidem, vere, certe Job dixit, Juſtus ſum.* Pined:

Vid: c. 33 8, 9. where this poynt is alſo diſcuſſed.

Secondly, In what sence did he speak this? For answer, when *Job* said, *I am righteous*, we must consider a two-fold righteousness; First, a perfect absolute righteousness, and that may be two-fold; First, the righteousness of justification, which is an imputed righteousness; Secondly, the righteousness of sanctification, which is an in-wrought or inherent righteousness; this latter is not absolute, or perfect in degree, while we abide in this life, yet it is dayly growing up to perfection, and shall at last attaine a perfect growth. If any say; Why then doth God call us to a perfection of sanctification in this life, if it be not attainable in this life? I answer, he doth it, first, to shew how holy he is; Secondly, to shew how holy we ought to be; Thirdly, he doth it, that we might run to Christ, *who is the Lord our righteousness; and who is made unto us of God, wisdome, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*: we being altogether short of righteousness, and short in righteousness, may goe to him, and have a compleat and perfect righteousness. Now besides this absolute righteousness of justification, which is attainable here, and of sanctification, which is not attainable here, but shall be hereafter, there is a comparatively perfect righteousness of sanctification, the righteousness of uprightness, and sincerity, when we strive to the uttermost to please God in all things by doing good, and can say, we doe not please our selves in any way of doing evill.

It should seeme that *Elihu* and *Job* did not wel agree about the definition of justice or righteousness. *Job* intending either civill righteousness towards men, or a righteousness imputed freely by God; but *Elihu* understood him of absolute perfect personall righteousness, which no man attaines unto in this life. For when *Job* is charged with saying, *I am righteous*, he said it either as a justified person, or as a sanctified person. In the former sence, he might say he was perfectly righteous, and in the latter he sayd he was so, as to the sincerity and uprightness of his heart with God, and this he might say of himselfe without fault or blame; for God himselfe had sayd of him (*Ch:* 1. 1.) that he *was a man perfect, and upright*.

Intelligitur justitia per fidem mediatoris spiritus sancti Arrabone confirmata; Neq; enim aliam potuit habere Job, qui suam claris verbis emoliretur. Coc:

I grant *Job* seemes to say, (though he said it not, with that aime or intention, yet he seemes to say) that he was even absolutely righteous, not only as justified but sanctified, while he said, (*Chap:* 31. 7, 8.) *If there be any blot cleaving to my hands, if my steps*

steps have gone out of the way, or my heart been deceived, &c. This gave *Elihu* occasion to charge him, with saying, *I am righteous*; he did not charge him with saying so, as justified through the free grace of God, nor did he charge him for saying so as to his sincerity, but he charged him in these two respects.

First, Because he spake so much of the righteousness of his way, and of his workes; for though it were true he was righteous in the sence by him intended, yet because he made it his business, and spent a large discourse to tell the world, how good, how just, and how holy a man he had been, this was more then became him in that condition.

Secondly, *Elihu* checkt him for saying so, because (though he were fully righteous as justified and sincerely righteous as sanctified) he complained of his afflictions, as if God might not lay his hand heavy upon him, no nor touch a righteous person with an afflicting hand; or as if he and all other righteous persons, ought to passe all their dayes in peace, and have an exemption from the crosse. Whereas one great reason why God afflicted him so sorely, was to make it knowne to all the world in his example, that meerely upon his owne prerogative and soveraignty, he both may and will when he pleaseth, afflict the most innocent person in the world. Yea, the intent of *Elihu* in urging and burdening *Job* with those sayings, was to convince him, that though he was a child of God, and had walked before him in righteousnesse and true holiness, yet he ought to humble himselfe and beare with meekness and patience the sorest visitations of God. And that therefore he should not have pleaded his owne integrity, to priviledge him from affliction, nor have sayd, *Why doe I suffer, seeing I am righteous?*

Hence note.

First, *That, as it is altogether sinfull for any man to say, I am altogether without sin*; (for 1 *John* 1. 8.) *If we say we have no sin, there is no truth in us*; and he who saith (in that sense) *I am righteous*, doth but declare his owne unrighteousness) so to speake *much of our owne righteousness and goodness* (though we are both good and righteous) *is evill and very blameable*. For whereas *Job* said, *I am righteous*, he should rather have left others to say it, he should have been satisfied that he was so without saying so; and though it cannot be denied that *Job* was extreamly urged to it

it (as hath been ſhewed more then once in opening this Booke) and it had been but neceſſary for him to ſay it once or twice in his owne defence, yet becauſe he ſayd it ſo often, it drew, and that deſervedly, this cenſure or charge upon him.

Hence take this corolary or inference.

If to ſpeake much of our owne righteouſneſs be diſpleaſing, then how abominable is it to be proud of it or truſt upon it?

There is nothing more pleaſing to God, then to ſee man walking in wayes of righteouſneſs, nor is there any thing more diſpleaſing unto God, then to ſee a man lifted up with or leaning upon his owne righteouſneſs. If we make our owne righteouſneſs our ſtaffe, God will make it our rod. And though he is farre from ſcourging us becauſe we are righteous, yet he will correct us if we proclaime our owne righteouſneſs, yea if we thinke it much, or thinke much of it. We muſt have a very great occaſion when at any time we beare witneſs to our owne righteouſneſs, and goodneſs; but if the heart be lifted up in pride, or truſt, at all, upon it, this renders man odious in the ſight of God. God ſaved *Noah* out of that common deluge, in which the old world periſhed; *For* (ſaith the Lord, *Gen: 7. 1.*) *thee have I ſeene righteous before me in this generation. Noah* was righteous before God, and was ſaved when others periſhed; but ſurely had he vainely boaſted or unneceſſarily voted himſelfe righteous before men, he had periſhed as well as others. It comes much to one and the ſame account with God, whether men be openly unrighteous, or whether (without a juſt cauſe and call) they open their righteouſneſs before men.

Secondly, Note.

How righteous ſoever we are in life, yea though we are righteous by faith, (which is our righteouſneſs unto life) *yet we muſt not plead that for our freedome from afflictions.*

We may plead the righteouſneſs of faith againſt condemnation, but not againſt correction; if any man be in Chriſt, he ſhall never be condemned; but though a man be in Chriſt, and juſtified by the higheſt actings of faith in the blood of the Covenant, yet he may be ſeverely corrected. This was (I conceive) the principall ſcope and intent of *Elihu* in charging *Job* thus, even to convince him, that though he was a faithfull ſervant of God, and of a very unſtained converſation among men, yet he muſt not thinke himſelfe above the croſſe, but quietly and meekly ſubmit to it. *Job* ſpake ſometimes fully to that poynt, *He deſtroyeth the righteous and the wicked, if the ſcourge ſlay ſuddenly, he laugheth at the tryall of the innocent* (Chap: 9. 23.) yet at other times he forgot himſelfe, and therefore he was (juſtly as to his preſent caſe, and profitably as to the future iſſue) remembred of it by this plaine and home-dealer *Elihu. Job hath ſaid I am righteous,*

And God hath taken away my Judgement.

As if he had ſayd, Once thou didſt ſay, *God deſtroyeth the perfect and the wicked*, but now thou ſeemeſt to ſay, thou art greatly wrong'd, and thy Judgement quite taken away, becauſe being a righteous man thou art thus afflicted.

Mr *Broughton* renders, *But the Omnipotent keeps back my right.* As Judgement is right fully given, ſo there is but little difference between keeping back our right, and *taking it away*; therefore the word ſignifieth not only *to take away*, or cauſe to decline, to divert and ſubvert, but to keep back or withhold any thing in any kind, as Mr *Broughton* tranſlates expreſſely. This is the thing (ſaith *Elihu*) which *Job* hath ſaid, *God hath taken away or kept back my Judgement.*

סור *eſt auferre declinare, divertere ſubvertere.*

But where did *Job* ſay this? he ſaid it (*Chap: 27. 2.*) *As the Lord liveth, who hath taken away my Judgement, and the Almighty who hath vexed my ſoule. Bildad* charged *Job* with it (*Chap: 8. 3.*) while he put this queſtion to him, *Doth God pervert Judgement? or the Almighty pervert Juſtice?* Implying that *Job* had ſpoken words reflecting upon the Juſtice and Judgement of God, in taking away his Judgement.

But you will ſay, What is Judgement? and what is it to *take away Judgement?* or how is a mans *Judgement taken away?*

I anſwer; There is a three-fold notion of Judgement in Scripture.

Firſt, Judgement is the reſult or iſſue of a mans reaſon about any matter or queſtion propounded to him. God ſometimes takes away mans Judgement in that ſenſe, and then he becomes a foole, and unable to judge. 'Tis a dreadfull judgement when God thus takes away mans judgement, and gives him up to a *Reprobate*

(or

(or an unjudicious) *minde*, as he did the old Gentiles (*Rom.* 1. 28.) for then he will quickly doe those things *which are not convenient*; not being able to distinguish nor discerne between true or false, he must needs put light for darkness, bitter for sweet, sweet for bitter; *Elihu* doth not represent *Job* complaining that God had taken away his judgement in this notion.

Secondly, Judgement is any angry dispensation or wrath powred out or executed upon persons, nations, or Churches; *If judgement begin at the house of God*, (that is, if trouble or wrath begin at the Church of God) *what will the end of those be that obey not the Gospel?* (1 Pet: 4. 17.) *Davids* Song consisted of two parts (*Psal:* 101.1.) judgement was one of them, *I will sing of mercy and judgement*. This notion of judgement is every where found in Scripture, yet neither is this the notion of it in this Scripture. God had not thus taken away *Jobs* judgement; he begg'd indeed that God would take away this his judgement, and it was the matter of his complaint, because he did not take it away.

Thirdly, Judgement is right done or right due; right due, is judgement due; right done, is judgement done. Thus *David* prayed (*Psal:* 72. 1.) *Give the King thy Judgements O God, and thy righteousness to the Kings son*; that is, give him an understanding to doe right, or to give every man his right. To doe this is a thing so desireable in all men, especially in Kings and Princes, that when God at *Gibeon* sent young king *Solomon* a blanke from heaven, and bid him aske what he would, he asked only this (1 *Kings* 3.9.) *Give thy servant an understanding heart, to judge thy people, that I may discerne between good and bad.* This is properly the judgement intended here. *Job* complained, *God hath taken away my Judgement*; that is, my right, or hath not done me right.

But how is Judgement taken away?

I shall answer it in three things.

First, When right is quite subverted, and over-throwne. This the Prophet elegantly expresseth and reproveth (*Amos* 6. 12.) *Ye have turned judgement into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into Hemlock.* Right done is sweete and wholesome, but right denied is bitter as Gall, and banefull like Hemlock.

Secondly, When Judgement is defer'd, stopped, or delayed, then

then 'tis taken away for a time. To have judgement long delayed, is alwayes next degree to the deniall of it, and sometimes delay is more cruciating and grievous then a deniall.

Thirdly, A mans judgement is sayd to be taken away, when the ground, or cause, of Gods proceeding with him in judgement, is hid, or unmanifest; Judgement, as to us, is not, when the reason of it doth not appeare to us, or when we see not the reason of it. To feel Judgement and not to see the cause of it, turnes it into a torment; we say commonly, *Things that appeare not, are as if they were not.* When the reason or ground of our sufferings is not understood, 'tis as if we suffered without any ground of reason.

When *Job* complained, *God hath taken away my Judgement*, we are not to understand him, as if *Elihu* intended it in the first or grossest sence, that God had subverted his judgement, or had done him wrong. *Elihu* could not suspect he had any such blasphemous opinion of God; for, that had fullfilled the Devills prophecy of him; *He will curse thee to thy face.* But when he sayd, *God hath taken away my Judgement*; he meant it according to the two latter interpretations, either that God deferred long to restore him, and answer his prayer, or that God had hid from him the reason of his dealing with him, so that he could not make it out, how, or why he was so sorely and grievously handled. *Job* knew well his owne innocency, but he did not well consider Gods soveraignty, which alone answers enough for him, how much soever he in this world afflicts the innocent. And therefore for as much as God held him long in that sad condition, and in the meane time hid his judgement, or the reason of it from him, this was *Jobs* grievance, and the burden of it pressed him to cry out, *God hath taken away my Judgement.* In this he was too bold with God, and therefore he justly fell under this censure of *Elihu*: As if he had sayd, It doth not at all become thee, O *Job*, as a creature, as a man, much lesse as a new creature, or as a godly man, to cry out (as thou hast done) that God hath taken away thy Judgement, because he doth not give thee an account, nor tell thee, why he judgeth thee; therefore humble thy selfe that ever thou hast sayd (and take heed thou say it no more) *God hath taken away my Judgement.*

Hence note.

First,

Firſt, *God ſometimes lets the goodneſs of his moſt precious ſervants lie in the dark.*

He goeth unuſuall wayes with many of his choyceſt ſervants; he doth not alwayes declare their right, nor deale with them according to the ordinary rule, in giving good to them that are good, (as not alwayes evill to them that are evill, the Lord is at his liberty in theſe preſent diſtributions, he is ſupream, and hath power over all fleſh) and ſo keepes their judgement in the clouds, or a ſecret to himſelfe.

Secondly, Note.

The Lord ſometimes is pleaſed to defer and delay to doe his ſervants right.

And thus he takes away their Judgement. Though he hath a purpoſe to give it them, yet he doth not preſently give it them; at laſt he will make even with all men, each man ſhall have his judgement; he will reward every one according to his worke, and the righteous, ſhall (without doubt) have a good reward.

Thirdly, Note.

When God doth either hide or defer the Judgement of a godly man, it doth very much affect, yea and afflict his heart.

We are uſually much afflicted with any dark diſpenſation upon many accounts, eſpecially upon this, becauſe it makes us obnoxious to every mans cenſure. When God takes away our judgement, we fall under the hard judgements of men; And to lie under the ill opinions of men unvindicated or unrighted, is no eaſie burden. We have that promiſe (*Pſal: 37. 6.*) *He ſhall bring forth thy righteouſneſs as the light, and thy judgement as the noone-day.* The righteouſneſs and judgement of a good man may be in a mid-night darkneſs as to man, and till that be brought to the light of other mens knowledge, himſelfe hath, ſometimes, little light of comfort.

Fourthly, Note.

It is ſinfull to complaine, and to be troubled, as if God had not done us right, becauſe we ſee it not done, or becauſe he deferrs to doe it.

In

In this *Job* was moſt faulty, he uttered many paſſionate ſpeeches about what God had done, becauſe things were not brought to an iſſue, nor his condition ſtated and cleared up, either to the world, or to himſelfe; This troubled him more then the extremity of his paine, or the greateſt of his troubles. How ſtiffely *Job* ſtood upon it, that his Judgement was taken away, will appeare yet further in the next words, which *Elihu* makes further matter of accuſation.

Verſ. 6. *Should I lie againſt my right? my wound is incurable without tranſgreſſion.*

In this verſe we have two other parts of the Inditement brought againſt *Job*, neere of the ſame nature with the former; wherein he yet more vehemently urgeth his owne integrity, and cryeth out both of the greatneſs and cauſeleſsneſs (on his part) of his preſent ſufferings. More diſtinctly *Elihu* in this verſe chargeth him.

Firſt, That he did over-eagerly maintaine his owne cauſe, *Should I lie againſt my right?*

Secondly, That he ſpake of God as dealing over-harſhly with him; *My wound is incurable without tranſgreſſion*; Theſe things (ſaith *Elihu*) thou haſt alſo ſayd.

Should I lie againſt my right?

We read the words as a Queſtion; others read them as a direct propoſition; *There is a lie in Judging me*, or, *There is a lie againſt my right*; The word which we here tranſlate *right*, is the ſame which we tranſlate *Judgement* in the former verſe. And when he ſaith, *There is a lie againſt my right*; It is as if he had plainly ſayd, *I am falſely charged, I am wrongfully accuſed, I am not ſuch a man as I am ſuppoſed, nor have I done thoſe things whereof I am ſuſpected.* Every falſie accuſation brought againſt a man, is a lie againſt his right. *In judicando enim me mendacium eſt.* Vulg:

Secondly, Others read it thus, *I ſhall make liers againſt my right*; that is, whoſoever ſtands up to prove any thing againſt me, as you have done, ſaying, *I am wicked, unrighteous, or hypocritically, I ſhall be able to prove him a lier.* But neither the Grammaticall ſignification of the words will fairely beare this ſence, nor doth it well correſpond with the former verſe, *Super judicium meum faciam mentiri.* i. e. *falſi arguam hominem qui volet mecum contendere.* Cajet: Item Chald:

In judicio meo mentior. Pisc. *Probarem si mentiri hoc sensu de persona dici invenire-tur nam de re usurpari certum est.* Drus.

Thirdly, Thus; *I lie in my Judgement*; that is, I am deceived in it, or I fayle of it. To *lie* in Scripture, is to faile, or to frustrate the hope of another. Some insist much upon this sence; as if he had sayd, *I come short of that which I looked for as my right or Judgement*; in this sence the word is often applyed to things, but not to persons, as some of the learned conclude upon this place. (*Isa:* 58. 11.) *Thou shalt be like a spring of water, whose waters fayle not*; we put in the margin, *lie not, or deceive not.* 'Tis a promise made to those who keepe a true fast, and keepe it truely, God will be to them as a spring whose waters lie not. All our fresh springs are or should be in God, and he is a spring whose waters are always fresh. No man ever came to him for matter, and was frustrated of his expectation. Thus also the word is used (*Hab:* 3. 17.) *Although the labour of the Olive shall fayle*; that is, though when you come to the Olive tree, you find no Olives there, nor see any hope of a drop of oyle in your whole Olive-yard, yet you may still rejoyce in the Lord, he is able to annoynt and fill you alwayes with the oyle of gladness. Thus *Job* is conceived complaining here of his deceived hopes, much in that sence as God himselfe in the Prophet (*Isa:* 5. 7.) is sayd to be deceived. *He looked for judgement, but behold oppression, for righteousness, but behold a cry.* I (saith *Job*) *looked for better things, I looked for light, but behold darkness, I looked to be acquitted, but behold I am hardly thought of and censured on every hand, I am quite disappointed, matters fall out and are otherwise then I did expect.*

In jure meo mentior. i. e. *quum innocentiam meam defendo putor mentiri.* Pisc:

Fourthly, *I lie in my right*; is thus expounded, *I am thought to lie, while I maintaine my right, or say I am righteous; I am judged a lyar, for saying I have walked in the truth.*

All these readings of the text are given from the affirmative translation.

But we, as also severall others translate by an interrogation, intimating the heate and earnestness of his spirit, in wiping off this aspersion; *Should I lie against my right?* I should not, I will not. As if *Elihu* had sayd; *Job hath insisted so much upon his owne righteousness, and right, that he will not be taken off from it upon any termes, nay he hath said, what? should I knowing my selfe to be innocent* (because of this cry against me) *cry guilty to this indictment; and so betray my owne innocency, or give away my right?*

Job

Job stands so much upon his owne righteousness, that if he should but acknowledge himselfe faulty, he thinkes he should lie, or wrong himselfe by speaking against his knowledge and conscience. And indeed *Job* (Chap: 27. 4, 5, 6.) spake fully to this effect, That it would be a wrong to or a lie against himselfe, if he should not stand up to the uttermost in his owne right, and defend his innocency; and 'tis probable *Elihu* hits at that passage, while he chargeth him with this passionate expostulation, What! *Should I lie against my right?* Would you have me say as you say, and so beare false witness, or be a false witness against my selfe? What ever comes of it, I will not doe that. *I will not lie against my right*, nor let goe my integrity; I will not in civility to any other mans understanding of me, subscribe to my owne wrong, or say I am, what I am not, or have done what I have not. *Elihu* brings this as a strong proofe of the height of *Jobs* spirit, as if to confesse his fault were to fall below himselfe, yea to belie himselfe; *Should I lie against my right?*

An par est ut mentiar super innocentia mea? Vatabl:

Hence note.

First, *To acknowledge we have done that, which we have not done, or that we are what we are not, is to lie against our owne right, or to wrong our selves.*

As many lie, by speaking more good of themselves then is true, or by denying that evill which in truth they are guilty of; so he that submits to that guilt which he is free from, or confesseth more evill of himselfe then is true, lieth against his owne soule. So did that *Amalekite* (2 Sam: 1. 10. compared with 2 *Sam:* 31. 4.) charge himselfe falsely with killing *Saul* in hope of a reward from *David* for his good newes. As no man ought to lie against another, much lesse against himselfe; And as that man doth wickedly belie himselfe, who saith he is better then he is, (for that's horrible hypocrisie; all such God will unmask one time or other, who thus cover themselves with lyes, and say (like those in the Prophet) they have dreamed when they have seene nothing, but the vaine phansies of their own braines, nor felt any thing but the presumption of their false hearts; Now (I say) as he doth wickedly bely himselfe who saith he is better then he is) so for any man to deny that good which God hath done for him, or wrought in him, or what he hath done or wrought in the feare and power

of God, is a dangerous way of denying and belying his owne right.

Hence secondly note.

No man ought to admit any charge against himselfe, wherein he is not guilty.

It is not in our liberty to give up our owne integrity, we may not give up the righteousnesse and innocency of others to a false witnesse, if we can detect it, much lesse our owne. Let no man lie against his right. It is our affliction only to be wronged by others, but 'tis our sin to wrong either others, or our selves. Yet

Thirdly, Note.

We may quickly over-act in standing upon our own right.

That caution of *Solomon* (*Eccl.* 7. 16.) seemes to carry this observation in it. *Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thy self over-wise: Why shouldst thou destroy thy selfe.* Some expound this precept as a rule of policy, advising all to a moderation in the practise of (that wherein there can be, indeed, no excesse) true piety and religion; as if it were a duty to study and comport our selves to a kind of neutrality and indifferency in the things of God, lest we expose our selves to the wrath and rage of men, who cannot beare it with patience to see any that are better or do better then themselves. But I conceive the Spirit of God in *Solomon*, was farre from breathing any such cold blast, to nip either the buddings or highest growths of godlinesse; and that he would not at all abate any in the practise of holinesse, but intends one of or all these three things. First, to take men off from any opiniona-tiveness, about what they judge to be righteous and themselves righteous in doing it, willing them to take advice, and not to lean to their own understanding, nor to rest in their own dictates as infallible; or Secondly, when he saith, *Be not righteous overmuch*, his meaning is, doe not exact the utmost of others which the Law in the rigour of it will allow; he that will not remit any thing of his right, is not only over-righteous, but may soon doe wrong; or Thirdly, when he saith, be not over-righteous, as he would not have men stand strictly upon their right with others, so he would not have them speak much of their own righteousnesse; but rather sometimes take blame to themselves, then (which was *Jobs* case) pro-

proclaime themselves altogether blamelesse. As we are not to betray our innocency, so not give a shadow of any boasting in it. We seldome lose by saying little of our selves. And in most cases we should rather trust God (who hath promised he will doe it, *Psal.* 37. 6.) *to bring forth our righteousnesse as the light*, then be over-industrious in bringing it to light, or in bringing it out of that darknesse with which it lyeth obscured, either by or among men. As we ought never to lye against our right, so it may not be convenient at some times to speake all the truth of it which we can. This at least was *Jobs* fault, and it will be any mans who doth like *Job*, yea though he should be (which few have been or are like to be) under as great sufferings as *Job*. The greatnesse whereof he aggravated to the hight in the next words, with which *Elihu* chargeth him.

My wound is incurable without transgression.

An incurable wound is the worst of wounds, and though to be wounded without transgression is best for him that receives it, yet it is worst for him that gives it. *My wound is incurable.*

The Hebrew is, *my arrow*; the arrow is a wounding weapon, and in this Text 'tis put for the wound it self. *Job* complained (*Chap.* 6. 4.) *The arrows of the Allmighty drink up my spirits*; There are arrows of two sorts, and answerably there are wounds of two sorts. There are first externall, secondly, internall arrows; God shooteth his arrows both into the flesh, and spirit; the former make a wounded body, the latter a wounded soule. *Job* may intend both, for he received wounds in both; his flesh was wounded, and all that belong'd to flesh, his estate, his credit and good name were wounded, his soule and spirit were wounded also, the arrowes of God were shot thick at him, and hit him from head to foot. *The Archers* (as dying *Jacob* said of *Joseph*, *Gen.* 49. 23, 24.) *sorely grieved him, they* [all] *shot at him, and* (one of them Satan) *hated him*; *but though his bow* (as to the maine) *abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob*; yet he cryed out as if there had been no helpe, no healing, no hope for him. *My wound*

Is incurable.

The word which we render *incurable*, signifies not only what is very

Gravissima est sagitta mea absque transgressione. Bez:

Hanc sagittam Elihu *vocat* אנוש i.e. gra-

vem doloratam pessimè habentem hinc Enosh homo ab infirmitate et fragilitate dictus.

very dolorous, or grievous, but mischievous, mortall, and deadly. And from this word man is called *Enosh* in the Hebrew, to shew how infirme and fraile he is, sin having given him a wound which is incurable, by any thing but the blood of Jesus Christ. *Job* felt his wounds, and he spake of them, as a man swallowed up with desperation, and expected no cure of his present sad condition; *My wound is incurable*, and he concluded with that which is yet harder, *My wound is incurable*

Without transgression.

Mr. *Broughton* translates, *My stroak is sore without trespasse.* *Job* in saying his wound was incurable, shewed a defect in his faith, but in saying it was incurable without transgression, he seemeth to shew his defect in truth. For surely had there not been transgression in him, there had never been a wound upon him; God had never so much as broken our skin but for sin; Man had never felt so much as the scratch of a pins poynt by the hand of God, if he had not once prevaricated and Apostatiz'd from God. We ow all our sorrows to our sins, all our woundings to our transgressings. How then doth *Job* say, *My wound is incurable without transgression?* The word here used is not usually put to signifie sin in generall (though some take it so) but some speciall kind of sin, & that of more then an ordinary degree, a sin with a malignity, a provoking sin; As if the meaning of *Elihu* were, that he heard *Job* say, Though his sin were not great, though it were not any rebellion against light, nor dangerous Apostacy, though his were a very curable sin, yet his wound was altogether incurable, his wound was great, though his sin was little. Now, because Justice doth usually apportion the punishment inflicted both to the nature and measure of the sin committed, therefore *Elihu* takes it (and he had too much occasion to doe so) as a great reflection upon the justice of God, when he heard *Job* thus bemoaning himselfe, *My wound is incurable without transgression.* To receive the least wound without transgression, is a great wound to justice, how greatly then doth he wound the Justice of God, who saith he hath received a great, yea an incurable *wound without transgression.*

פשע *denotat grave scelus vel Apostasiam.* Scult:

But where spake *Job* these words, when said he, *My wound is incurable without transgression*, (we must bring in that, *Job hath said*, to every one of these charges) I answer, *Job* spake of the arrows of God (*Chap: 6. 4.*) and that they were incurable, he saith in other words (*Chap: 16. 13.*) *His arrowes compasse me round about; he cleaveth my reines asunder; he powreth out my gall upon the ground.* When a mans reines are cleft in sunder with an arrow, and his gall powred on the ground, his wound is incurable.

But where did he say, *My wound is incurable without transgression*; *Elihu* might collect that from (Chap: 9. 17.) *He breaketh me with a tempest, and multiplyeth my wounds without cause*; and from (Chap: 16. 16, 17.) *My face is foule with weeping*, &c. *not for any injustice in my hands.* While *Mary* washed the feete of Christ with her teares (*Luke* 7. 38.) she might be sayd to foule her owne face with her teares. Teares, which (in a qualified sence, or as a token of true repentance) wash and cleanse the soule, doe yet blubber and disfigure the face. My face (saith *Job*) is foule with weeping, though my hands are not foule with sinning, or any evill doing. This was, in effect to say what *Elihu* here censureth him for saying, *My wound is incurable without transgression.*

Hence note.

First, *God hath his arrows, he can wound us when and where he pleaseth.*

He shooteth and misseth not his marke. He hath a quiver full of deadly arrows; take heed how ye provoke him. *Jbb* had a whole quiver of arrows emptied upon him for triall, for the exercise of his patience. Woe to those upon whom God emptieth his quivers in vengeance. (*Psal: 7. 11, 12, 13.*) *God is angry with the wicked every day; if he turne not, he will whet his sword, he hath bent his bow, and made it ready; he hath also prepared for him the instruments of death, he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutours.*

Secondly, Note.

The wounds which God makes cannot be healed by any medicines but his owne.

Jobs wound was incurable, there was no balme for him in the *Gilead* of this world, no Physician there. And therefore the Lord bids

bids *Egypt*, in ſcorne, ſeeke healing there (*Jer:* 46. 11.) *Goe up into Gilead and take balme, O virgin, the daughter of Egypt: in vaine ſhalt thou uſe many medicines, for thou ſhalt not be cured.* Who can heale where God will wound? (*Pſal:* 38. 2, 3.) *Thine arrows ſtick faſt in me, there is no ſoundneſs in my fleſh*; even *David* complained that the wounds which the arrows of God had made in him were incurable. *Why is my paine perpetuall* (ſaid the Prophet, *Jer:* 15. 18.) *and my wound incurable, which refuſeth to be healed? When Ephraim ſaw his ſickneſs, and Judah ſaw his wound, then went Ephraim to the Aſſyrian, and ſent to king Jareb to help him, yet could he not heale you, nor cure you of your wounds.* (Hoſ: 5. 13.) God gives ſtates or bodyes politick ſuch wounds, as all the medicines and meanes in the world cannot helpe: They may goe to the *Aſſyrian*, and ſend to king *Jareb*, to this and that power; They may call a whole colledge of State-Phyſicians or deepeſt politicians for counſel and adviſe, yet neither one nor other can be a healer to them. Therefore in the next Chapter (*v.* 1.) the Church concluded upon another courſe, and a better addreſſe, then either to the *Aſſyrian*, or to king *Jareb*. *Come let us returne unto the Lord, for he hath torne, and he will heale us*; only the Lord who gives the wound can heale the wound; the ſame hand which ſmites us muſt cure us, elſe our wound is incurable.

Thirdly, Note.

To complaine of our wounds as incurable, or paſt cure, is an argument of our unbeliefe.

'Tis good for us even to deſpaire of help from creatures, and to ſay the leaſt wound (if but the ſcratch of a pin) is incurable by all the art, meanes, and medicines which this world can adminiſter, but to ſay our wound (though never ſo deep, dangerous, and deadly) is abſolutely incurable, is our ſin. While we ruine our ſelves (that is, while we provoke God to ruine us, yet) there is hope in God; *O Iſrael, thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelfe, but in me is thine helpe* (Hoſ: 13. 9.) *deſpaire as much as you will of creatures helpe, but ſtill hope in God.*

Thirdly, In that he ſaith, *My wound is incurable without tranſgreſſion.*

Note.

The

The Lord may, and doth take liberty to afflict thoſe grievouſly, who have not ſinned greatly.

There is no man liveth and ſinneth not, yet every man is not (in ſtrict ſenſe) a ſinner, that is, a great ſinner, a rebell, a worker of iniquity; yet the Lord when 'tis needfull giveth them great wounds, who have not (comparatively) ſinned greatly. Though no ſin ſhould be little in our eye, yet there are degrees of ſin, and ſome are leſſe then others in the eye both of God and man. *Elihu* chargeth *Job*, not as ſaying he had no ſin, but becauſe he complained his wounds were great, though his ſins were not; or that there was not a due proportion between his offence and his puniſhment, his ſins and his ſufferings.

Hence note, Fourthly.

Though the Lord taketh liberty to afflict thoſe greatly that have not ſinned greatly, yet they muſt not take liberty to complaine of the greatneſs of their afflictions, how little ſoever their ſins have been.

A gracious heart lookes upon the leaſt of his mercies, as greater then the greateſt of his good deſervings, and upon the greateſt of his ſufferings, as leſſe then the leaſt of his ill deſervings or demerits. And ſurely (beſides that liberty which God hath, as he is ſupreame, and ſoveraigne, to afflict whom he will, and in what degree he will we muſt know, that, the leaſt ſin deſerves the greateſt wound. An evill thought deſerves all the evill that can be heaped upon us. Whatſoever we ſuffer on this ſide hell is leſs then the leaſt of our ſins. And therefore if we have reaſon to confeſſe our little ſins great, and our greateſt wounds little, compared with our little ſins; how much more ſhould we confeſſe our great ſufferings little, compared with our great ſins, as the Church did (*Ezra* 9. 13.) *After all that is come upon us* (our long and hard bondage in *Babylon*) *for our evill deeds, and for our great treſpaſſe, thou O Lord, haſt puniſhed us leſſe then our iniquities deſerve.*

Further, from the whole verſe, in that *Elihu* chargeth *Job* with theſe ſeverall ſayings.

Obſerve, Firſt.

A good mans ſayings are often worſe then his meanings.

Elihu rebuketh his speeches, not his spirits; his words though in some respect true, yet were dangerous, and because not well explained by himselfe, scandalous to others; But his heart was not trecherous, nor the bent of his mind wrong set, in uttering them. Evill men may speake good words, but 'tis with a bad heart; Good men sometimes speake bad and offensive words, yet with honest hearts; and when their mindes are serene, and they cleared from those clouds of perturbation, which have darkned them, they (as *Job*) are ready to recant them, and repent of them.

Secondly, Note.

It is an high offence to intimate any thing which doth in the least intrench upon the Justice, and righteousnes of God.

To say, God hath taken away our judgement, may call downe judgements; To say, we are wounded without transgression, is a great transgression; and the reason, why it is so, is plaine, because such sayings, tell the world, that we suffer, if not quite without desert, yet more then we deserve; and what is this but to justifie our selves, and lay blame upon God, then which (as was shewed at the 2d verse of the 32d Chapter) nothing is more derogatory to God, or more blame-worthy in man.

Thirdly, Note.

If we speak amisse, or indiscreetly about the dealings of God with us, we may thank our selves if we are hardly censured, and soundly chidden for it.

Though *Jobs* heart was honest, yet his tongue was intemperate, and he too bold with God; and you see how God stir'd up the spirit of *Elihu* to lay it home to him, and bring him upon his knees for it. They who vent unwarrantable speeches, must not thinke much if they meet with sharpe reproofes and cutting censures. Tongue-faults seldome escape without tongue-lashes; And 'tis a mercy to meete with them from a faithfull friend; Their lashing and cutting tongues prove healing tongues, (*Psal.* 141. 5.)

Fourthly, Note.

Every speaker is at the mercy of his hearers.

No man knows what glosse his words may have put upon them when once uttered. Here are foure sayings brought against *Job*, yet *Job* never spoke any of them expressely, or in so many words, but such collections were made (indeed they were, as not false, so not favourable collections) from what he had spoken. And he had but a poore remedy left, to say he did not meane them so. Take heed what you speak, words are usually judged as others understand them, not as you mean them. Indeed charity doth always incline to the best construction; and will not interpret that ill, which may beare a better interpretation. But who knoweth whether his words shall alwayes meete with a charitable interpreter, our words doe not often meete with just and equall ones. Nothing, indeed, is more common with uncourteous hearers, then to misconster those they heare, or to judge of what is spoken rather as it may be taken to the speakers hurt and defamation, then their owne profit or instruction. And therefore though I would advise every hearer to use as much charity as may be, yet I would also advise every speaker to leave as little as may be to the charity of his hearers.

Thus much of the first part of the charge in these foure sayings. In the three verses following, *Elihu* prosecutes the charge, and standeth in admiration, as here at the sayings of *Job*, so there of his doings.

JOB. Chap. 34. Verſ. 7, 8, 9.

What man is like Job, who drinketh up ſcorning like water?
Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.
For he hath ſayd, it profiteth a man nothing that he ſhould delight himſelfe with God.

THeſe three verſes containe the ſecond charge or accuſation, which *Elihu* had drawne up againſt *Job*. And in it we may diſtinctly conſider; Firſt, the forme of it; Secondly, the matter of it.

The forme of it is by way of queſtion; *What man is like Job?* The matter of it conſiſts of three heads.

Firſt, That he was a man of a ſcornfull ſpirit towards others, or that he had ſubjected himſelfe to the ſcorne of others; *What man is like Job, which drinketh up ſcorning like water?*

Secondly, *Elihu* chargeth him, as having fellowſhip with men of a vaine and offenſive converſation (*v.*8th) *Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.*

Thirdly, He chargeth him (which is indeed the ground of the former) That he was a man, not only of unſound, but of blaſphemous principles and opinions (*v.* 9th) *For he hath ſayd, it profiteth a man nothing that he ſhould delight himſelfe with God.* This 9th verſe is the proofe of the eighth; For ſome might enquire, How doth it appeare, that, *Job goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men? Elihu* anſwers, It appeareth by his words, or from his owne mouth; *For he hath ſayd, it profiteth a man nothing, that he ſhould delight himſelfe with God.* And if a man once judge that there is no profit in the wayes of God, he thereby declares his conſent to the wayes of the wicked. That's the ſumme of the charge, and theſe the parts of it.

Verſ. 7. *What man is like Job?*

איש non pro quolibet homine ſumitur ſed pro claro & ſapiente.

The word rendred *man*, doth not ſignifie every ordinary man, but a great or wiſe man, a famous or a powerfull man. What great or wiſe man is like *Job?* Poſſibly ſome may be found among the dreggs of the people or among the common ſort like himſelfe, but among men of honour and reputation for wiſdome, ſurely, there are none to be found like him. Yet ſome take it (out of the ſtrictneſs of the original word) for a man of the loweſt or meaneſt condition; What man is like *Job?* that is, no man, no not of the meaneſt degree is like him. And ſo the queſtion may be carryed under a threefold notion.

Firſt, As a vilifying queſtion, *What man is like Job?* Who is there that hath but the name and face of a man that would doe or ſpeak things as he? *Job*, in this matter, is worſe then any man, then the worſt of men. He acts and ſpeaks at a lower rate of prudence and piety then many, if not then any of the loweſt among the ſons of men.

Secondly, We may look upon it as an angry paſſionate queſtion, a queſtion carrying in it higheſt indignation; *What man is like Job?* who ſo vaine, raſh, fooliſh and inconſiderate as he? I have ſcarce the patience to ſpeake or think of him.

Thirdly, We may take it as an admiring queſtion; *What man is like Job?* It is a thing unheard of, even a ſtupendious prodigie, that a man ſhould be or doe as *Job*. All ſorts of men abſtaine from or decline, yea ſcorne ſcorning ('tis a thing ſo unbecoming man) but chiefly they that are great, noble and honourable, ſuch as *Job* hath been in his time, yet he is turned ſcorner. As if he had ſayd, Who hath heard the like? was there ever ſuch a man heard of, who either uſed ſuch ſcornfull language againſt others, or layd himſelfe ſo open to the ſcorne and contempt of others! *What man is like Job,*

Who drinketh up ſcorning like water?

That's matter of admiration; *Elihu* might have found out many other matters, wherein *Job* had no fellow, no parallel, ſcarce any like him in the world; who ſo afflicted, ſo humbled, ſo broken, ſo deſerted by his owne relations, ſo vexed with friends and comforters like *Job?* But he doth not put the queſtion upon his ſufferings, but upon his ſin; *What man is like Job, who drinketh up ſcorning*, &c. *Drinking* is here uſed metaphorically, and ſo likewiſe are eating, devouring, and ſwallowing up often uſed in Scripture, to denote that which is done to be done with much greedineſs,

neſs, and with a kind of delight. And whereas there is a three-fold meaſure or degree of drinking; Firſt, ſoberly, or for neceſſity: Secondly, plentifully or for moderate delight; Thirdly, exceſſively, or for drunkenneſs, and the ſatisfying of a luſt. This third ſeemeth to be here intended, even an exceſſive drinking of ſcorne, till he was as a drunken or mad-man with it, or (as we ſay) mad drunke; For the text ſaith, *What man is like Job, who drinketh up ſcorning.* He doth not only taſt it a little, and ſip at the ſcorners cup, but drinks it up to a drop, or to the bottome. *He drinketh up*

ſcorning.

Quis ita videtur et ſanna excipitur ut Job? bibit ſubſannationem id eſt ſubſannatur. Druſ: *Significat Jobum ad ſe videndum omnes provocare cum talibus ſermonibus utitur.* Merc:

And that's a ſtrange kind of drink, one of the worſt if not altogether the worſt of Natures brewing. Scorning may be taken 2 ways, either paſſively or actively; ſome take it in a paſſive ſignification; *What man is like Job, who drinketh up ſcorning like water?* that is, who is ſo ſcorned, or who ſubjecteth himſelfe to the ſcorn of men as he hath done. What wiſe or diſcreete man did ever lay himſelf ſo naked, ſo open to contempt as he? or who like him would render himſelfe ſo ridiculous, ſuch a laughing ſtock to all his hearers, who are but rationall and underſtanding men? It cannot be denied (nor doth *Elihu* in ſpeaking thus courſely of him deny it) but that *Job*, moved doubtleſs by the holy Ghoſt, had ſpoken many excellent things, full of divine light and learning, yet moved with paſſion, he ſpake ſometimes much amiſſe, and is charged for it, as if like a ſhameleſs perſon, he had proffered himſelfe, by laviſh and intemperate language to the laſh of every tongue.

Secondly, Scorning may be taken actively; *What man is like Job, who drinketh ſcorning like water?* That is, where ſhall we find ſuch a ſcorner? who hath uttered ſo many reproachfull ſpeeches, as *Job?* He drinketh ſcorning, as if he thought he could never fill himſelfe enough with ſcorning. This interpretation may have a a double reference.

Firſt, To his friends, who it ſeemes, were very ſenſible that he put ſcornes upon them. *Zophar* complaineth of it (*Chap:* 11. 3.) *When thou mockeſt ſhall no man make thee aſhamed*; As if he had ſayd, when thou haſt mocked and derided us, ſhall we let thee alone, and ſay nothing? ſhall we ſuffer our ſelves to be abuſed and paſſe it by in ſilence? ought we not to tell thee of it, and rebuke

buke thee for it openly, and to thy face, that thou mayeſt ſee thy error and be aſhamed of it?

Secondly, (which is yet higher, and I judge too high) his ſcorning is referred by ſome to the dealings and providences of God, as if he had ſpoken of them with a kind of ſcorne, at leaſt with that irreverence, and ſlightneſs of ſpirit, which *Eliphaz* did early and earneſtly admoniſh him of (*Chap:* 5. 17.) *Deſpiſe not thou the chaſtning of the Lord*; and which the Apoſtle cals *The exhortation, which ſpeaketh unto us as unto children* (Heb: 12. 5.) *My ſon deſpiſe not thou the chaſtening of the Lord.* Thus alſo *Elihu* may in a qualified ſence be underſtood charging *Job* with *drinking up ſcorning like water.* As if upon the whole matter he had ſayd, *Job hath drunke ſcorne till he is almoſt drunken with it, at leaſt, he is ſo full of it, that he powres it out upon every one that comes neare him, and which is worſt of all, he ſpeakes ſo unbecomingly, that we ſhall not much wrong him, if we ſay he hath ſpoken or acted deſpiſingly (which is a degree of ſpeaking or acting ſcornefully) concerning the chaſtenings of God upon him.*

Bibere ſubſannationem velut aquam eſt eſſe plenum ſermonibus ridiculis. Vatabl:

Further, When 'tis ſaid, *He drinketh ſcorning like water.*

It may imply three things; Firſt, the frequency of his ſcorning, he doth it commonly, he is at ſcorning as often as at drinking; Secondly, the content which he was ſuppoſed to take in ſcorning, *water* cooleth and refreſheth the heated and wearied body: Thirdly, it may note the eaſineſs or naturallneſs of it to him. To drinke is naturall to man, it puts him to no paines nor ſtudy. We ſay proverbially of that which a man doth without trouble; He doth it as eaſily as he drinkes. But of this word *drinking* and *drinking like water*, the reader may ſee more upon thoſe words (*Chap:* 15. 16.) *Man drinketh iniquity like water.*

Once more, whereas *Elihu* ſaith of *Job*, *He drinketh ſcorning*

like water.

Some have made a criticall obſervation or diſtinction about it; *Elihu* doth not ſay, he drinketh ſcorning like *wine*, but like *water*; They who are provoked or led on to ſin by the delight and ſweetneſs which they find in ſin, are ſayd to drink it *like wine* (*Prov:* 4. 17.) They drink the wine of violence; or they drink

violence

violence *like wine*. It goeth downe sweetly and pleasantly; But (say they) such as sin, not out of pleasure but out of will or out of an affected maliciousnes, are sayd *to drink iniquity like water*, which hath little pleasure in it, little sweetnes or taste in it. There's small savour in water comparatively to wine and other delicate or delicious liquors. So that (according to this notion) they drink iniquity like water, who sin for sins sake. And indeed some are so delighted in sin it self, that they will sin in that which yeilds them no delight. The very act of doing evill is more contentfull to them, then any fruit or consequent of it. But we need not stay in this nicity, the generall sence falls hard enough upon *Job*, to drink scorning like water, is to be much and often in scorning. Water is the cheapest liquor, and of most common use; every man can goe to the price of that which costs nothing (in most places) but the labour of taking it up. *What man is like Job, that drinketh scorning like water?*

Taking the words in a passive sence, as *Job* was a person scorned, and drunk in the scornes of men powred upon him, as the earth drinketh in water.

Note.

He behaveth himselfe unlike a man, that layeth himselfe open to, and readily admits the scorne of men.

It is an affliction to be scorned by others; But it is a sin to render our selves a scorne to others, and not to be sencible of it.

Secondly, (which I rather adhere to) taking the active sence, he is charged with speaking scornfully to his friends, or of the dealings of God with him; how farre this charge might reach *Job*, hath been toucht a little already; and will be cleared yet further before the close of the whole matter brought against him in this context. But in the meane time, from the general sence of the words (not concluding *Job* broadly such a one)

Observe.

Scorners are the vilest sort of men.

What man is like *Job*, who drinketh scorning? Not to doe good is sinfull, but either to scorn that which is good or those that are good is farre more sinfull. That man is gone his furthest length, or ascended to the highest step of sin, who turneth scorner, or gives

gives himselfe a liberty to scorne others. The first words of *David* speake this (*Psal:* 1. 1.) *Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsell of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornfull.* Here are three degrees of sinning; walking, standing, sitting: He that sitteth in the seate of the scornfull, or hath commenced *scorner*, hath taken the highest degree, and is the chiefe Graduate in the Schooles of sin. And as to sit in the seate of the scornfull, is the highest degree of sinning, so they that are got into that seat, care not how long they sit in it, yea, are hardly ever got out of it. So much that chiding question or expostulation of *Solomon* doth fully import (*Prov.* 1. 22.) *Ye scorners, how long will ye delight in scorning?* As if he had sayd, When shall it once be? will ye never have done, nor give over that trade? Scorners are therefore the worst of men, because they deride the best both of things and men (*Prov:* 21. 24.) *Proud and haughty scorner is his name, who dealeth in proud wrath.* Scorners are the children of pride. A proud spirit vents it selfe in scorning. Pride doth not appeare so much in apparrell, in gay clothes and new fangled fashions (all which are often used as flaggs of pride and vanity) nor doth pride appeare so much in praising our selves (though there it appeareth much) as it doth in scorning others. *Proud scorner is his name.* And as the scorner is a proud despiser of others, so a quarrelsome contender with others, and till he is separated from men, there is nothing but separation, no peace among men (*Prov:* 22. 10.) *Cast out the scorner, and contention shall goe out; yea strife and reproach shall cease*; which plainly intimateth, that strife cannot goe out till the scorner be cast out. And therefore *Solomon* (Pro: 24. 9.) calleth *the scorner an abomination to man*. Thus the Scripture sets the scorner among sinners of the chiefest rank and first forme; I may say, he is of the first three, if not the first of that three. Therefore take heed how ye drinke scorning, especially take heed it be not your mornings draught; for as it comes from the heart, so it will fly up into your head, and unfit you for any good worke, at least, that day.

Againe, from the similitude here used, *to drink up scorning like water*, which (as hath been shewed) holds out the readines and connaturallnes of an action unto him that is charged with it.

Note.

The more easily any one sinneth, the greater is his sin.

It is best to come hardly off in sinning, and when it goeth hardly downe; Many sin as easily as they eat or drink. *They eat up my people as bread*, (saith God, *Psal:* 14. 4.) that is (as we say) they make no bones of it; there's nothing stickes in their throats, nor troubles their conscience. Where sin lives altogether unmortified in any man (it doth so in every meere naturall or unregenerate man) 'tis no more to him to sin, then it is either to live, or to eate and drink for the maintaining of life. But they shall feele soreest paines for sinning, who have sinned with greatest ease; they shall drinke dammage by scorning like Gall and Wormewood, who have drunke scorning like water. *Elihu* having thus taxed *Job* with scorning at good men, proceeds to tax him with overmuch freedome and familiarity with evill men.

Vers. 8. *Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.*

Noscitur ex comite &c.

As if he had sayd, you may know what he is, by the company he keepes.

He goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, or he associates and puts himselfe into the society of *the workers of iniquity*. *Elihu* doth not say, he dwelleth among the workers of iniquity; The best man in the world may dwell among bad men; *Lot* dwelt in *Sodome*. We must goe out of the world, if we will not be among the wicked; the world is every where full of the workers of iniquity. But (saith he) *he goeth in company with them*. Which intimates the activenes of his spirit with them; yea the election of his spirit, or that he chose their company. Though a good man may be in the company of the wicked, yet he doth not choose their company; He is not of their body of their society or gang. A wicked man doth not content himselfe to be among the ordinary sort of sinners, he is for, and best likes the worst of sinners, *workers of iniquity*. All are sinners naturally, but some are sinners artificially; they study sin, they contrive and plot mischiefe; *They devise iniquity upon their beds*, saith one Scripture; *They weave the spiders webb*, saith another. Here's artificiall sinning. The Greekes call such, *sin-workers*, and crafts-men in evill. I have had occasion to speake of these from other passages of this Booke. Here *Elihu* to highten the charge against *Job*, saith, *He goeth in company with* (such

ἁμάρτυρες καὶ τέκτονες κακῶν.

(such or chooseth such kind of company) *the workers of iniquity*;

And walketh with wicked men.

As our holinesse is expressed by walking with God, so our sinfullnesse by walking with wicked men. To walk with God is all the commendation of *Enoch*, who was so holy on earth that God tooke him up to Heaven, (*Gen.* 5. 22.) *He had this testimony* (saith the Apostle, *Heb.* 11. 15.) *before his translation, that he pleased God. To walk with God, is to please God*, or to give up our selves wholly to God. *Can two walk together except they be agreed?* is the Prophets question, (*Amos* 3. 3.) They who walke together are supposed to have one will, as they are seen to have one way. What God willeth they will, and what God willeth not, they will not who walk with him. To *walk with wicked men* implyeth an agreement with them, and a conformity to them, as being of their fraternity, company and livery. They that walk with wicked men, declare their familiarity with them, or that their mind and manners are the same. The Apostle tells the *Corinthians* (1 *Cor.* 3. 2.) *Whereas there is among you envying, strife and divisions, are ye not carnall and walk as men*, that is, as men in their naturall and sinfull condition walke. Though ye are spirituall in your state, yet ye act as carnall men. Now, as it is sinfull for a godly man to walke *as a man*, or according to man, (as our Margin hath it, for he should walk *as God*) so it is much more sinfull to walk with wicked men, or according to the worst of men. Thus the Apostle describes the conversation of the *Ephesians* before conversion. (*Eph.* 22.) *And you hath he quickened who were dead in sins and trespasses, in which sometime ye walked according to the course of this World*. That is, according to the tide, current and streame of the times and places wherein ye lived. *Man naturally doth not walk where he ought to goe, but where he seeth the most goe.* He is led by the worst of examples (such are the examples of the most or of the many) rather then by the best of rules. It is our duty, and it should be our delight to walk with those who delight in the Law and in the way of God. *David* saith of his deceitfull friend, but reall enemy. (*Psal.* 55. 14.) *We walked unto the house of God in company*. As if he had said, time was when he and I were as if he had been I, both of us but one, in that one thing necessary

Qua itur non qua eundum.

ceſſary, the worſhip and ſervice of God. It is a good argument, that man hath an heart for God, who walks with good men in the wayes of God. To converſe much with or to be much in the company of good men, is a probable ſigne of goodneſſe; but when we walke with them to the houſe and worſhip of God, or converſe with them in the duryes of holineſſe, this is a great (though no infallible) argument of goodneſſe. And to be ſure to walk with evill men, eſpecially to joyne with them in doing evill is an argument that the man is evill. Therefore *Elihu* may ſeeme to bring a demonſtration againſt *Jobs* godlineſſe (that he intended it not ſo I ſhall ſhew afterwards, but, I ſay, he ſeemes to ſay ſo) while he ſaith, *Job walketh with wicked men.*

The Hebrew Phraſe uſed in the Text is more then (as we expreſſe) *wicked men*, we may render it *men of wickedneſſe*; the Scripture calleth thoſe men ſo who are (as it were) transformed into wickedneſſe, or formed up of wickedneſſe. As ſome men are ſo witty, that we call them *men of wit*, and others ſo judicious that we call them *men of judgment*, as ſome are ſo skilfull and cunning, that we call them *men of skill and cunning*; ſo ſome are ſo wicked, that the Scripture calls them *men of wickedneſſe*; even with theſe very dregs of mankind, it ſeemes *Job* conſorted. *He goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.*

But here it may be queſtioned, was it indeed ſo with *Job*, or was *Job* ſuch a man as he is expreſly charged to be both in this and the former verſe? Did *Elihu* judge him *a ſcorner, a companion of the workers of iniquity, and a walker with men of wickedneſſe?* Doubtleſſe that's not *Elihu*'s ſcope or intention; nor could he imagine that *Job*, in ſtrict ſence, was either a ſcorner of good men, or choſe the company of wicked men. And ſurely all that knew *Job* could certifie (upon their knowledge) that he was a man of a gracious ſpirit and unblemiſht life; that he loved good men and ſweetly converſed with them, and therefore was farre from cloſing with deboyſt companions, or men of a profligate ſpirit. Why then doth *Elihu* ſpeak thus? or ſpake he the words of truth and ſobriety while he ſpake thus?

Anſwer, this forme of ſpeaking doth not alwayes import a likeneſſe of converſation and diſpoſition, as ſometimes it doth, (*Prov.* 1. 11, 15.) *Come with us, and caſt in thy lot among us, let*

let us all have one purſe. My ſon, walk not thou in the way with them, refraine thy foot from their path; that is, doe not hearken to the call of thoſe workers of iniquity. Here in the Text to goe in company with the workers of iniquity, and to walke with wicked men, notes only the doing or ſpeaking that which carryeth ſome likeneſſe to them, not a being altogether like them. A man is ſaid to goe and walke with others, when he ſpeaks or doth that which ſeemes to ſuite and favour their principles, opinions or practices, though in truth they are the abhorrence of his ſoul. *Elihu* durſt not, could not aſſert directly and properly that *Job*, who was a man famous for piety in the dayes of his proſperity, and who in his affliction had not the leaſt degree of ability or opportunity for it, walked with wicked men: But becauſe in the anguiſh of his ſoul he ſpake ſometimes intemperately of the dealings of God (which is the guiſe, ſpirit, and common language, in ſuch caſes, of wicked and ungodly men) therefore he chargeth him as ſymbolizing or complying with men of wickedneſſe. So that when *Elihu* ſaith, *he goeth with wicked men*, he doth not accuſe him for keeping bad company in his proſperity; but with ſpeaking hardly of God in his adverſity, as ungodly men uſe to doe, when they are under his hand. He doth not ſay, you upon ſuch and ſuch a day kept evill company and converſed with men of wickedneſſe; but you have ſpoken much like the wicked in the day of your calamity. That this was his ſcope appeares plainly by the proofe of this charge, which is alſo a new charge (*verſ.* 9.) *For he hath ſaid, it profiteth a man nothing that he ſhould delight himſelf with God. Elihu* doth not ſay, *Job* walketh with wicked men, for we have ſeen him in their company, and he hath been as vaine and wicked as they. But his proofe that *Job* walked with the wicked was from his words; *For he hath ſaid it profiteth a man nothing*, &c. This is the language of the wicked, thus they uſe to ſpeak about the wayes of God; and *Job* hath ſpoken thus; therefore, *What man is like Job that drinketh ſcorning like water, which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.* I need not ſtay here to ſhew how great an evill it is to keepe evill company, for that was not the ſin which *Job* was accuſed of. Yet from the letter of the Text,

Note

Note firſt.

To aſſociate with wicked men, or to chuſe wicked men for our company, is the mark of a wicked man.

A godly man may be among wicked men, but he doth not chuſe their company. He while with them is as *Lot* was in *Sodom*, his righteous ſoule is vexed. A godly man is among wicked men, as his graces are among his corruptions; as his humility is with his pride, his faith with his unbeliefe, theſe are all in his ſoul at once, but his faith doth alwayes ſtrive againſt his unbeliefe, his humility oppoſeth his pride, his grace of ſelf-deniall, reſiſts his ſelf-ſeeking, his meekneſs his paſſions, and his patience the unquietneſs of ſpirit. A godly man is pained in the company of wicked men, as *David* was (*Pſal:* 120. 5.) *Woe is me that I ſojourn in Meſech, and dwell in the tents of Kedar.* *David* was there but he did not delight to be there. To aſſociate with the wicked is proper to the wicked. The Apoſtle gives that caution (*Eph:* 5. 11.) *Have no fellowſhip with the unfruitfull works of darkneſs, but rather reprove them.* Seeing the works of darkneſs are unfruitfull of any good, it muſt needs be bad to have followſhip with them. As we muſt not at all joyn with wicked men in ſpirituall communion or Church-fellowſhip (2 *Cor:* 6. 14.) *Be not unequally yoaked with unbelievers; for what communion hath light with darkneſs, and Chriſt with Belial,* &c. *Come out from among them, and touch no uncleane thing.* So we ſhould have as little civill communion or fellowſhip with them as we can; and when we are neceſſitated to have civill communion with them, we muſt utterly avoyd all ſinfull communion with them, that is, communion with them in their ſins. It is both a ſhame to Goſpel profeſſion and a great offence to the ſincere profeſſors of the Goſpel, when they who profeſſe it are much in the company of the workers of iniquity, and walke with wicked men.

Secondly, From the matter of the charge,

Obſerve.

While godly men behave themſelves like wicked men, they may be ſayd to goe in company with them.

This heavy charge falls juſtly upon them whether they demeane themſelves in their affliction (as *Job* in ſome ſort did) like

like the wicked, or in the dayes of their fullneſs and proſperity. If we ſpeake or doe like wicked men, we have our amends in our hands if we are numbred with them, though we are not really of their number. Some good men when they have got much of the world about them make but an ill uſe of it. Are wicked rich men proud? ſo are they in a great meaſure, you may ſee vanity in their houſes, and ſuperfluity upon their tables, as if they alſo were making proviſion for the fleſh to fullfill the luſts thereof. Now if a godly man, when he hath the abundance of this world makes himſelfe more unfit for the next world; is he nor in this like the wicked? or if when God layeth him low, he be full of complainings and have riſings of heart againſt the dealings of God; what is this but to do like the wicked, who in their ſtraits quarrell with God, & blaſpheme his name? (*Iſa:* 8. *ult.*) *When they are hungry and hard beſtead, they curſe their God and their King.* Thus the wicked doe; and it was the Devills plot to make *Job* do ſo too; and becauſe in the extremity of his ſufferings he ſpake ſuch things as favour'd of a murmuring ſpirit, *Elihu* taxeth him as walking with wicked men. For as when wicked men act and ſpeake like good men, it may be ſayd they goe in the company with the godly, and walke with the workers of righteouſneſs, though they are ſtarke nought all the while, being (as the Apoſtle gives their character, *Tit:* 1. 16.) *Abominable, diſobedient, and unto every good worke reprobate*; So ſome good men under temptation act and ſpeak like the wicked, yet retaine their goodneſs, and are as to the generall ſtate of their perſons, and bent of their hearts, acceptable, obedient, and enclined to every good worke. It will doe the wicked no good at laſt, that they have thus gone in company with the good; but it is very ſinfull for and hurtfull to good men, to goe in company or walk with wicked men, though it be but (as *Elihu* makes his proofe of it againſt *Job*) only in uſing their *Sibboleth*, or ſpeaking a language like theirs.

Verſ. 9. *For he hath ſayd, it profiteth a man nothing that he ſhould delight himſelfe with God.*

I ſhall, Firſt, open the words a little, and then, Secondly, inquire, (as of the former) how *Job* might fall under this accuſation.

He:

He hath ſayd, it profiteth a man nothing.

That is, a man ſhall get nothing, or have no advantage by it. As Chriſt ſaith (*Mark* 8. 36.) *What ſhall it profit a man to gaine the whole world, and loſe his owne ſoule?* But what was this trade which *Elihu* accuſeth *Job* to have called unprofitable? Surely that which of all others is moſt profitable. *It profiteth a man nothing*

that he ſhould delight himſelfe with God.

This goes deep; *Elihu* doth not tax him with ſaying it profiteth a man nothing to doe this or that good, which God commandeth, but (which is more) *that he ſhould*

delight himſelfe with God.

רצה The word rendred *to delight*, hath a three-fold ſignification, and all very full to this poynt and text.

Firſt, *To run*, which is the ſpeed of our pace. Thus the Septuagint render it, *Although he run with God* (Cant: 1. 4.) *By reaſon of the ſavour of thy good oyntments, therefore doe the virgins love thee, draw us and we will run after thee.* To run is more then to walk. To walk with God, notes our obſervance of all holy duties, but to run the way of Gods commandements, notes us zealous in them and for them. To run, requires not only an honeſt heart, but a large one; and therefore *David* ſayd (*Pſal:* 119. 32.) *I will run the way of thy commandements, when thou ſhalt enlarge my heart. Thou* (ſaith *Elihu* to *Job*) *haſt ſayd*, (according to this reading of the word) *it ſhall not profit a man though he run with God*, though he make never ſo much ſpeed in his work and wayes; though he be (beſides faithfull and upright) forward and active for God.

Secondly, The word ſignifieth *To have or be of the ſame will or mind with another.* Thus alſo ſome render it here; *It profiteth not a man, though he willeth with God, or be of the ſame mind with God.* The Apoſtle exhorts (*Phil:* 2. 5.) *Let this mind be in you which was in Chriſt Jeſus. To will* is an internall motion, *to run* an externall; How faſt ſoever a man may run with God in outward actings, yet, poſſibly, he doth not will with God at all, nor hath a mind conformable to the mind of God. The hypocrite is thus ſet out (*Pſal:* 50. 18, 19.) *When thou ſaweſt a thiefe, thou conſentedſt with him*, &c. Thou hadſt a mind to be a thiefe as well as he. One wicked man minds and wills the ſame things with another, and all godly men will the ſame things with God. Yet (ſaith *Job*) *it ſhall not profit a man*, though he have the ſame will with God, or though he willeth the ſame good things which God himſelfe willeth.

Thirdly, The word (according to our tranſlation) ſignifieth more then barely to will, it takes in the affections and joyes of the ſoule. He that delighteth in God, hath ſweet content and complacency in God, he not only approves of all the ſayings and doings of God, he not only followeth his counſell, and his conduct, but is highly pleaſed and fully ſatisfied in God. Delight is the reſt of the ſoule. When we delight in God, and find every act of obedience our joy and our ſong, our meat and our drink, then the heart is wound up to the higheſt pitch of holineſs. And therefore as his heart is fallen downe to the loweſt pitch of unholineſs, who ſayth, it profiteth a man nothing to ſerve God, ſo is his much more who ſaith, *What ſhall it profit a man though he delight in God?*

But here againe it may be queried, Where did *Job* ſay, *that it ſhould profit a man nothing though he delight himſelfe with God?* If you read his diſcourſe all over, he never ſpake theſe words directly or explicitely, they are the language of hell. But *Job* had ſpoken words, which (unleſs taken in a very favourable conſtruction) might beare this cenſure. He ſpake thus, in a manner, while he at once juſtified himſelfe ſo much, and cryed out as much of the hard dealings of God with him. And while in many paſſages of this Booke he denieth that the godly have a preſent reward in this life, and alſo affirmeth that many wicked men injoy outward proſperity, and paſſe unpuniſhed. Theſe ſpeeches might eaſily be interpreted (by common and carnal men eſpecially) that, *Job* thought it an unprofitable thing to delight in God. For if All things in this life come alike to all, to the godly, and to the wicked, what doth it profit a man (as to this life) that he ſhould delight himſelfe in God? who among the ſons of men (that knoweth of no profit beyond this life) can delight himſelfe in that, which brings no profit? *Job* alſo ſayd (*Chap:* 9. 22.) *God deſtroyeth the wicked and the righteous*, that is, he afflicts the good as much as the bad, this was a principle which he held out all along.

Videtur principium unde ad omnia peccata feruntur improbi approbaſſe, eſt enim præmij fides non tantum ſtimuli ſed et hujus vitæ magnum incitamentum ad obſequium. Coc:

Now becauſe the Scripture ſaith, *He that cometh to God, muſt believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of thoſe that diligently ſeek him* (Heb: 11. 6.) and (1 Tim: 4. 8.) *Godlineſs is profitable for all things, having the promiſe of the life that now is, and of that which is to come*; (which Scriptures though not extant when *Job* lived, yet the truth contained in them was) *Elihu* might well be led into this apprehenſion, that *Job* had brought up an ill report upon the wayes of God, as (in this life) unprofitable unto man. But though *Job* ſpake thus, yet he was farre from ſpeaking this to juſtifie ſuch an opinion, that there is no profit for a man to delight himſelfe with God. His meaning was only this, that a man may want temporall preſent profit, notwithſtanding his delighting in God. He was full and poſitive enough, that they who now delight in God, beſides the preſent inward peace and profit which they find and feele, ſhall hereafter be crowned with everlaſting rewards and delights. *Job* ſhould indeed have been more in juſtifying God, more in ſetting forth the preſent profitableneſs of his wayes in the practiſe of an holy life; And becauſe he was ſo ſparing in this poynt, and inſiſted ſo often upon the afflictions of the people of God. *Elihu* chargeth him with ſaying, *It profiteth a man nothing to delight himſelfe with God.*

Hence note; Firſt.

It is our duty, and the ſumme of all holy duties to delight our ſelves in God.

The very ſpirit of holineſs conſiſts in this; There is (as I may call it) a body of holineſs, but if you would have the ſpirit of holineſs (as by diſtillation we take the ſpirits of any liquor, or of any thing that liquor and moyſture hath in it, if, I ſay, we would have the ſpirits of holineſs) 'tis delighting in God. For as 'tis the ſpirit of ſinfullneſs to delight in ſin; ſo the ſpirit of Godlineſs is to delight in God.

Note.

Secondly, *To account the ſervice of God unprofitable, is wickedneſs bordering upon blaſphemy.*

Job himſelfe is now charged with that, which he charged upon the wicked (*Chap:* 21. 15.) *What is the Almighty that we ſhould ſerve him? and what profit ſhall we have that we pray unto him?* This

This grand prophaneſſe the Prophet rebukes (*Mal:* 3. 14.) *Ye have ſaid, It is in vaine to ſerve God, and what profit is there that we have kept his ordinances?* Thus the carnal heart, which would faine free or keepe it ſelfe from keeping the ordinances of God, is ready to queſtion, whether there be any profit in keeping them. And while ſuch ſeeme only to put the queſtion, they indeed conclude, that there is no profit in keeping them; yet the truth is, the very keeping the ordinances of God, as it is an act of obedience to him, and of communion with him is very profitable, though we ſhould have no viſible nor ſenſible profit by it. In keeping the commandements of God, *there is great reward* (Pſal: 19. 11.) that is, the keeping of them is a reward, as well as a reward is promiſed to thoſe that keepe them. The Reader may conſult this poynt further, at the 15th verſe of the 21th Chapter.

Note, Thirdly.

Good men ſometimes ſpeak worſe then they meane.

Job never thought it was no profit to ſerve God, yet he had let fall words which might beare that gloſſe. As wicked men often ſpeake better then they meane; They have golden words in their mouths, when there is nothing but droſs in their hearts; their words are ſmoother then oyle, yet they are drawne ſwords; their words ſound well, while they wound deep, (now as a carnal man ſpeakes often better then he meanes, and ſometimes ſpeakes purpoſely the beſt when he meanes worſt) ſo a godly man ſpeakes ſometimes worſe then he meanes, or he may ſpeak ill when he intends nothing but good. Holy *David* (which comes up fully to the ſence of what *Job* is taxed for ſaying here) ſayd (and what could he ſpeak more unholyly) (*Pſal:* 73. 15.) *Verily I have cleanſed my heart in vaine*, &c. What language was here? would one think to heare *David* foule his mouth with ſuch words as theſe? would one think, that ſuch a word could have dropt from the mouth of *David*, whoſe mouth uſed to drop like an honey-comb, & whoſe lips were wont to be like a tree of life feeding many? yet *David* in temptation, that is, in great affliction (for he there complaines that he was chaſtened every morning) ſpake thus with his tongue to the griefe of his heart a little after. The tongue is an unruly member, (as the Apoſtle *James* ſaith, *Chap:* 3. 8.) *The tongue can no man tame*; we need a great command upon the heart to bridle

bridle the tongue, and tame that unruly beaſt. Many a good man hath been over-borne with his tongue. That little member hath ſometimes cruſht both ſoule and body very ſorely. *Jobs* tongue fell heavily upon him.

Obſerve.

Fourthly, *Inconſiderate words render us obnoxious to ſevereſt cenſures.*

Thou haſt ſayd, It profiteth a man nothing to delight himſelfe in God, is a very ſevere cenſure; And though *Job* did not deſerve it fully, yet he might have expreſſed himſelfe more commodiouſly and profitably. *Juſt conſequences from what we ſay, may be charged upon us as our ſayings.* Indeed to wier-draw words or ſtraine conſequences from them, is very unchriſtian. Some deale ſo with the holy Scriptures (2 *Pet:* 3. 16.) *Wreſting them to their owne deſtruction*; They torture and ſtretch them upon the tenters to their owne hurt. And to wreſt a mans words, or as the Prophet ſpeakes (*Iſa:* 29. 21.) *To make a man an offender for a word*, is an act of great uncharitableneſs towards man, and to God an high offence (Not but that a man may be an offender for his words; nor can a man be more truly an offender for any words, then when he ſpeakes reproachfully or ſleightly of the workes of God) But when men ſpeak ſuch words as are reall offences, and yeild foule conſequences, fairly, they muſt beare the burden. And that was *Jobs* caſe here.

But ſome may ſay, If *Job* never ſpake theſe words in termes, nor any words like them, with ſuch an intent, why doth he ſuffer *Elihu* to accuſe him, and not take off his accuſation, nor give a word of anſwer for himſelfe? Why did he not vindicate himſelfe, or make his Apology?

I anſwer, and my anſwer ſhall be the laſt note from this context.

A godly man will rather beare more blame then he deſerveth, then ſtand to excuſe himſelfe when he hath deſerved any blame.

Job replyed no more, ſpake no more, but to ſhew that he yeilded to what was ſayd, and ſubmitted to this diſpenſation of God in ſending *Elihu* to charge him thus. He tooke more upon him then he had ſayd, leſt he ſhould ſeeme to juſtifie any thing that he had ſayd amiſſe. (*Chap:* 40. 5.) *Once have I ſpoken, but I will not anſwer: yea twice, but I will proceed no further.* As if he had ſayd, I will make no more pleas for my ſelfe, nor excuſes, I will cry guilty to the whole matter of my charge, though I might cleare and diſcharge my ſelfe of much of it. How far was the ſpirit of *Job* from theirs, who though charged with that only which they have directly done, or ſpoken, yet ſtand it out in pleading their excuſe, and will never fall downe before reproofes, though what they have done or ſpoken amiſſe, be ſo plaine, that it needs no proofe.

We ſhould be careſull to ſpeake and doe ſuch things as are not ſubject to reproofe, but when through ignorance or raſhneſs we have run into an error, either of ſpeech or practiſe, we ſhould be ſo humble as to ſubject our ſelves to reproofe, and take it well that we are rebuked for any evill. As it doubles an offence to undertake the defence of it, ſo not to defend an offence abateth and leſſeneth it. And as he who goeth about to cover his fault by finding out arguments and pleas for it, ſheweth that he hath a will or purpoſe to continue in it; ſo he that is ſilent, and hath not a word to ſay for it, gives a good teſtimony both of his ſorrow that he ever committed it, and of his reſolution never to commit it any more. They are highly to be commended who live unblameably, and they deſerve no ſmall commendation, who being ſenſible of their owne fayling, can patiently beare the blame of it, without replying upon their reprovers.

JOB. Chap. 34. Verſ. 10, 11.

Therefore hearken unto me, ye men of underſtanding: far be it from God, that he ſhould doe wickedneſſe, and from the Almighty, that he ſhould commit iniquity.

For the work of a man ſhall he render unto him, and cauſe every man to find according to his wayes.

Elihu having done with *Jobs* charge for ſeverall unwarrantable ſayings in the former context, begins his refutation here, and directs his ſpeech.

Firſt, To *Jobs* friends, ſpeaking to them from the 10th to the 16th verſe.

Secondly, To *Job* himſelfe, from the 16th verſe of this Chapter to the 34th.

In the two verſes now read, we have two generall poynts.

Firſt, A vehement deniall of any unrighteouſneſſe in God, (*v.* 10.)

Secondly, A ſtrong proofe or demonſtration, that there is no unrighteouſneſſe in God, at the 11th verſe. He enters this confutation of *Job*, or the vindication of the honour of God from what *Job* had ſayd, with an inviting Preface.

Verſ. 10. *Therefore hearken unto me, ye men of underſtanding.*

Elihu like a cunning Orator often ſtirr'd up his auditors to attention, and made frequent inſinuations to winde himſelfe and what he had to ſay into their good opinion. Here he beſpake not the promiſcuous multitude or common ſort of hearers, but wiſe men, or men of underſtanding, ſuch as are moſt fit to judge the weight and ſtrength of thoſe arguments and reaſons, by which any poynt is proved and confirmed.

Hearken unto me, ye men of underſtanding.

The Hebrew is, *ye men of heart*, ſo the Margin hath it; As the heart is the principle of naturall life, ſo the principles & powers of

of the rationall life are often aſcribed to the heart. *Job* told his friends (*Chap.* 12. 3.) *I have a heart* (we render, *I have an underſtanding*) *as well as you*; and in good Authors a *hearty man* ſignifies not only a man of courage, or a man of ſpirit, but a man of knowledge and underſtanding, a man more then ordinarily wiſe, a man of the higheſt Elevation for wiſdome, is called *a hearty man*. Naturaliſts have aſcribed the moving of ſeverall paſſions, to ſeverall internall parts of the body; laughter (ſay they) riſeth from the *ſpleene*, anger from the *Gall*, love from the *liver*, but to the *heart* they give more then a paſſion, *underſtanding*, which is the nobleſt faculty of reaſon. Here *Elihu* calls upon men of heart, or of underſtanding to hearken to him.

Egregiè cordatus homo. i. e. *valde ſapiens.* Cic: 1. Tuſcul.

Hence note.

Firſt, *The beſt may need to have their attentions quickened.*

Some will not heare at all, they are like *the deafe adder* (Pſal. 48. 4, 5.) *that ſtoppeth her eare, which will not hearken to the voyce of the charmer, charming never ſo wiſely*; The Prophet reproves ſuch (*Jer.* 6. 10.) *To whom ſhall I ſpeak and give warning, that they may heare, behold their eare is uncircumciſed and they cannot hearken; behold, the Word of the Lord is to them a reproach, they have no delight in it; they cannot hearken*, that is, they will not; or they cannot hearken, that is ſpiritually and obedientially, though they have a naturall, yet they have not a gracious eare, as the ſame Prophet (*chap.* 11. 6, 7, 8.) upbraided them; *yet they obeyed not, nor enclined their eare.* This ſinfull deafneſſe the Lord complained of alſo, (*Pſal.* 81. 8.) *Heare O my people*, (ſaith God) and at the 11 verſe, *My people would not hearken to my voyce*; Now as bad men will not heare at all to purpoſe; ſo the beſt ſeldome hear ſo well or to ſo good purpoſe as they ought and might. Men of heart or of underſtanding are ſometimes ſlow of hearing, and may need to have their eare awakened.

Secondly, note.

It is an incouragement in ſpeaking to have underſtanding hearers.

When a people have not only eares, but hearts to heare, then the word is heard indeed. We may ſuppoſe underſtanding men will probably prove the beſt hearers; the Prophet was in hope to

[illegible] the ranck of his hopes. (*Jer.* 5. 4.) *Surely these are poore*, they are foolish (men of low parts, and thin intellectualls) *for they know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgment of their God. I will get me to the great men and will speake unto them, for they have knowne the way of the Lord*, (they are wise surely and understanding) yet he was disappointed in his recourse to them, as it followeth in the same verse, *but these have altogether broken the yoke, and burst the bonds.* There is a naturall wisdome which hindereth the hearing of the word, therefore the Apostle saith; *Not many wise men after the flesh are called*, that is, savingly called; the word hath its full effect upon few of them, they are not prevailed with to beleeve and obey; they are called, but they come not. Though wisdome be an advantage to profitable hearing, yet all naturall wise men doe not hear profitably, nor indeed can any, by all the wisdome of nature.

Thirdly, note.

A man without understanding is a heartlesse man.

Headlesse men are heartlesse men. It is said (*Hos.* 7. 11.) *Ephraim is like a silly dove without a heart.* All the people of God are or should be innocent doves, like doves for innocency and gracious simplicity; but how unbecoming is it that any of them should be doves for sillinesse or *silly doves without a heart*; that is without any spirit or courage for God, and the things or wayes of God. To be without a heart is to be without a due apprehension of the mind of God, or any true conformity thereunto; 'tis to have no knowledge either to doe good, or to be good; all such are silly doves without a heart, without understanding, and all such are yet unfit and unprepared hearers. *Hearken to me ye men of understanding,*

Farre be it from God that he should doe wickedly.

Absit a me coram domino impie agere &c. Sept:

The Septuagint turn the sence of the words into another channell; as if *Elihu* spake here in his own vindication, and not in Gods; and so they render the Text personally of *Elihu*; *Farre be it from me that I should do wickedly before God*; or, *that I should pervert Justice before the Almighty*; as if *Elihu* had said; *I am now to speake before God, or in Gods presence*; *God being my witnesse,*

nesse, therefore I had need look to it while I am speaking before the righteous God, that I speake righteously, and while I speak before the God of truth, that I speak according unto truth; farre be it from me that I should doe wickedly before God; there is a truth in this translation. But this is not a true translation according to the Hebrew; nor is it the truth of this place. *Elihu* speaking in so weighty a matter might well say *farre be it from me to pervert justice* so much as in a word, because I speake before God, and am in the presence of the Almighty. We should not speak a word amisse in his sight or hearing, who seeth and heareth what all men doe and say, whatsoever they are doing or saying, especially, when they are doing or saying that which is of neare concernment to himselfe. This rendring gives us a usefull caution. But doubtlesse *Elihu's* purpose here was not to shew with what reverence of God, himselfe was about to speak, but that he was about to speak for the vindication of the righteousnes of God, which he thought *Job* had wronged by that assertion when he said, (*vers.* 9.) *It profiteth a man nothing that he should delight himself with God.* Hereupon *Elihu* with some heat of spirit turnes upon him in these words,

Farre be it from God that he should doe wickedly.

חלל *profanum aut pollutum esse. A deo procul est omne profanum. Affectionem indicat animi, qui scelus aliquid a se, vel ab alio deprecatur et horret.* Sanct:

The word rendred God forbid is often used in Scripture, implying the greatest detestation and utter abhorrence of that which is extreamly offensive to us; the root of it signifieth any thing that is prophane, filthy, or polluted; because all prophane things and persons are farre from God, that is, such as he utterly abhorreth. Further, the verbe signifieth as to pollute, or to prophane, so to offer violence, to wound and kill unjustly or murtherously; which sence complyeth fully with the businesse in hand. *Job* had complained that his innocency, at least that he being innocent, was sorely afflicted and wounded, and lay as it were weltring in his gore and blood. Hereupon *Elihu* stands up to vindicate the righteousnesse and justice of God, *Farre be it from God*, &c. When a Judge doth unrighteously he offereth violence to the Law, and viciates that chast Virgin Justice, committed to his care and keeping. All acts of injustice are therefore farre from God, even the abomination of his soul, because polluted and filthy in themselves, as also such as pollute and defile all those that use them.

Thus *Abraham* spake to God (*Gen.* 18. 23, 25.) *Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked, that be farre from thee, &c.* He spake of it with indignation as a thing most unworthy of God, to wrap up good and bad in the same common calamity. When all *Josephs* brethren as one man (*Gen.* 44. 17.) offered to become his prisoners, *God forbid* (said he) *that I should doe so*, ye shall not all suffer for one mans fault; let that be farre from me, he that is found in fault only shall be my prisoner. Thus *Elihu* would remove the remotest suspicion of unrighteousnesse from God when he saith, *farre be it from God that he should doe wickednes.*

Hence note.

We should reject all unworthy thoughts of God with indignation and detestation.

The Apostle shewed a spirit full of this fire (*Rom.* 3. 5, 6.) *Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance?* (*I speak as a man*) that is, naturall or carnall men are apt to think so, but *God forbid*, or, let it not be once named by those who name (that is, professe) the name of God. If every one *who nameth the name of Christ must depart from iniquity* (2 *Tim.* 2. 19.) woe to those who say that Christ himself closeth with any iniquity. As God himself puts all evill farre from him, so should we put the least thought of it farre from God. What can be more unjust then to have so much as the shadow of a thought that God doth any injustice! away with such blasphemous suggestions, can he who is the very rule of righteousnesse doe unrighteously? To throw this dirt into the face of God hath as much absurdity and irrationallity as blasphemy in it. None but they who know not God, can have such apprehensions of him. To doe wickednesse is farre from God, and therefore let man be farre, even as farre as the east is from the west, from saying or thinking that he doth any. *Farre be it from God*

That he should doe wickednes.

רשע *significat quodvis peccati genus, quod contra æquitatis sit norma.*

The Text is, *farre be it from God from wickednes*, we render *that he should doe wickednes*. The word signifieth *wickednes* of the worst sort; that wickednes which does not only break the Law (so every the least sin doth) but slights it, and denyeth it any

any reverence or regard. It is farre from a godly man to sin at this rate, to doe wickednesse. Then, O how *farre is it from God that he should doe wickednes*,

nam, omnique caveat legu ratione. Bold:

And from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity.

Elihu useth two Titles or Names of God, First, *the strong God*, the mighty God. Secondly, *Almighty*, the Allsufficient God; farre be it from the *Allsufficient that he should doe any iniquity*. He that hath all things in his power, and can command Heaven and Earth, heart and hand, he that is able to supply all deficiencies in the creature by his allsufficiency, farre be it from this *Allmighty God* that he should commit *iniquity* towards man. Strength without goodnesse is alwayes unprofitable, and often hurtfull. Goodnes without strength is very unusefull because so weake. But where both strength and goodnes meete and center in the same person, as he is able to doe much good, so he hath no will to doe evill or offer injury to others. How then should the *Allsufficient commit iniquity?*

The word rendred *iniquity* signifies any crookednes or perversnesse, any distortion of right and justice. Now right or justice is distorted many wayes, chiefly these five.

First, by a flat denyall of it. Secondly, by a tedious delaying of it. Thirdly, by punishing where there is no fault. Fourthly, by not rewarding where there is desert. Fifthly, Justice or right is distorted, by giving the same or a-like award to those who are unlike, or (in their acts or deserts, whether good or bad) not the same. To doe any of these perverse or crooked things is the doing of iniquity, or the perverting of Justice. All these *Elihu* removeth farre from God, while he saith, *Farre be it from the Almighty that he should commit iniquity*. God will not, cannot commit iniquity, either by denying or delaying justice, either by not punishing or rewarding where there is cause, or by dealing out alike to those in whose doing and dispositions there is an utter unlikenes. *Farre be it from the Almighty, that he* should commit any of these iniquities.

שוד *fraudem aliquando innuit. Et generaliter dicitur de omni injuria omnig; malo contra leges.*

Hence note.

First, *To doe any act of injustice is wickednesse.*

Elihu taxed *Job*, for complaining of Gods Justice (*v.* 9.) And here

here he ſaith, *Far be it from God, that he ſhould doe wickedneſſe.* Injuſtice is wickedneſſe againſt God, who commandeth us to be juſt, and it is wickedneſſe againſt man, who is alwayes wronged by injuſtice.

Secondly, As to that particular which *Elihu chargeth Job* with.

Note.

If the Lord ſhould not reward thoſe that ſerve him, and delight in him, he were unrighteous.

(Heb: 6. 10.) *God is not unrighteous to forget your labour of love*; He is not unrighteous to forget it, that is, not to recompence it; by forgetting it, he doth not meane the letting of it ſlip out of his mind, but the not making a due returne to it, or the not giving it a juſt reward. It is unrighteouſneſſe in God not to reward thoſe who ſerve him, becauſe he hath promiſed to reward them. *Say to the righteous, it ſhall be well with him* (Iſa: 3. 10.) The promiſes run to it, all the Scripture over; and as it would be unrighteouſneſſe in God not to reward thoſe that do well; ſo not to pardon them that have done ill when they confeſſe their evill deeds, becauſe he hath promiſed to pardon them; and therefore the Scripture ſaith (1 *John* 1. 9.) *If we confeſſe our ſins, he is faithfull and juſt to forgive us our ſins.* The Scripture doth not ſay, he is mercifull to forgive us our ſins, (though mercy act to the higheſt in the forgiveneſs of ſin) but he is faithfull and juſt to forgive us our ſins; and the reaſon why the Scripture ſaith ſo, is becauſe forgiveneſs of ſin (in caſe of confeſſion) is under a promiſe. To come ſhort of our promiſes, is to be unrighteous; promiſes are bonds upon the promiſer, and oblige to performance.

Thirdly, Note.

The ſtrong God, the mighty God, neither doth nor can doe any unrighteouſneſſe or iniquity.

I ſay, he neither doth nor can doe iniquity. God can doe no iniquity, becauſe in him there is none. *He is my rocke* (ſaith *David*, *Pſal:* 92. 15.) *and there is no unrighteouſneſſe in him.* As none can doe righteouſneſſe, but they that are righteous, ſo he that neither is nor can be unrighteous, cannot doe any unrighteouſneſſe. That in the Pſalme is very conſiderable, that while he ſaith, *There is*

is no unrighteouſneſſe in God, he immediately before ſaid, *He is my rocke*; implying that God can no more be moved or removed from doing righteouſly, then a rocke can be removed out of its place. We find *Moſes* alſo giving God the ſame attribute, when he ſpake of his indeclinableneſs in juſtice (*Deut:* 32. 4.) *He is a rocke, his worke is perfect, all his wayes are judgement.* The wayes of God are not all judgement, as Judgement is oppoſed to mercy; ſome of his wayes are mercy, and others of them are Judgement; but all his wayes are judgement, as Judgement is oppoſed to injuſtice or unrighteouſneſſe, that's the ſignification of Judgement, when *Moſes* ſaith, *All his wayes are Judgement, he is a God of truth, and without iniquity, juſt and right is he.* The Apoſtle puts this denying queſtion with much vehemency (*Rom:* 9. 14.) *What ſhall we ſay then, is there unrighteouſneſſe with God? God forbid.* And 'tis very conſiderable that the Apoſtle put this queſtion with ſo much abhorrence, preſently after he had ſpoken of that Act of God which is ſo much quarrelled at by the ſons of men, as unrighteous and unjuſt; *Eſau have I hated, and Jacob have I loved, and that, when they had done neither good nor evill* (v. 11.) What (ſay ſome) will God doe thus? will he hate or love, before ever men doe good or evill? yeas, ſuch acts of love and hatred, of election and rejection are gone out from God. And becauſe *Paul* foreſaw, that men (according to their narrow apprehenſion) would be ready to ſay, ſurely God is not right in this; therefore he ſubjoynes, *What ſhall we ſay then? is there unrighteouſneſſe in God?* As if he had ſayd, I know ſome men will be ready enough to ſay ſo, and thinke they have reaſon enough to ſay ſo; They all muſt needs ſay ſo, who meaſure God by their ſhallow braines, (ſuch are the deepeſt braines compared with God) and therefore *Arminius*, with his followers, (that they may avoyd this difficulty) carry the interpretation of this Scripture to another poynt, as if it had nothing to doe with the eternall purpoſe of God concerning man, but only reſpected his dealings with them about temporalls, or his dealing out temporalls to them. I urge that text becauſe it hath occaſion'd (through mans corruption) great contending and quarrelling about the righteouſneſs of God; yea ſome have preſumed, there can be no maintaining that opinion of the abſolute decree, without faſtening unrighteouſneſſe upon God. But the Apoſtle by the Spirit foreſeeing this fleſhly objection,

ction, hath forelayed and prevented it, concluding, *O man, who art thou that replyest against God, shall the clay contend with the potter*, &c.

Now, as in this act of eternal Election, so in all providentiall acts, the Lord is infinitely unmoveably and unspottedly just and righteous; he not only doth righteous things, but he cannot doe any thing that is unrighteous. And this seeming impotency is the reall power of God, and his most glorious perfection. For, as 'tis from the weaknesse of man that he can doe iniquity, so 'tis from the power of God that he cannot. That God cannot lye, that he cannot doe any unworthy thing, is an argument of his omnipotence. God can no more doe iniquity, then he can cease to be God; his righteousnesse, his justice is himselfe; the Justice of God is the just God, the righteousnesse of God, is the righteous God; he hath not only a principle of righteousnesse in him, as man may have, and every Godly man truely hath, but he is righteousnesse. A Heathen Poet had this apprehension of his Idol Gods; *They love not unrighteousnesse, but honour Justice.* But Jehovah the true, the living God, doth more then affectionately love and honour Justice, He is is essentially Just. That man who is in a state of righteousnesse, loves to be doing and will doe righteous acts; things and persons are in their working as they are in their being; *He that doth righteousnesse is righteous*, (1 John 3. 7.) God is righteous, infinitely righteous, in his being, or nature, therefore he cannot but doe that which is righteous; to doe an unrighteous act were to offer violence to himselfe, to destroy himselfe.

θεοὶ δὲ οὐσκέλτια ἔργα φιλοῦσι, ἀλλὰ δίκην τιμῶσι. Homer:

Againe, God doth not worke by a rule without him, as men doe (and therefore men often goe beside the rule, and doe amisse, or act unrighteously, because the rule is one thing, and they are another, the rule is without them) but God himselfe is the very rule of all things, and hence it followeth undeniably, that every thing is righteous and just which he doth, even because he doth it; 'tis enough to prove that right which is done, if we can prove God hath done it. The proud Monarch *Nebuchadnezzar*, was at last brought to this confession (*Dan:* 4. 34, 35.) *At the end of the dayes* (namely, of his seven yeares banishment to the beasts) *I Nebuchadnezzar lift up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most high*, &c. *Who doth according to his will* (there is the rule with him) *in the Army of*

of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, nor say unto him, what dost thou? Which is true upon a double account; First, as to his soveraignty and dominion, he is supreame Lord, and none can give him a check or countermand; *Who may say unto him, what dost thou?* Secondly, with respect to his righteousnesse. As he can doe what he will; so he will doe nothing, yea he can doe nothing but what is right, or what he may; *Who can say unto him, thou hast done amisse? Who can see a fault, in any of his workes?* If God hath done a thing, there is no query to be put about it whether it be right or no? for he is righteousnesse it selfe.

Abraham useth another argument to shew that God can doe no unrighteousnesse (*Gen:* 18. 25.) *Shall not the Judge of all the earth doe right?* God (saith he) is the Judge of all men, therefore he neither will nor can doe wrong to any man. *Abraham* did not plead there, as if he doubted that God might goe wrong, unlesse he by his intercession did take him off; but he brings an argument whereby he was assured that God would doe right, yea could not but doe right. *He is the Judge of all the earth.* So (*Rom:* 3. 6.) assoone as the Apostle had sayd, *Is God unrighteous that takes vengeance? I speak as a man*; he subjoynes, *God forbid, how then shall God judge the world?* God is Judge of all the world, and the universality of his power puts him above all possibility of error in the exercise of his power. The very reason why God doth not, cannot exercise his power beyond or besides the limits of justice, is because his power is altogether unlimited.

Fourthly, *Elihu* here speakes of God under the notion of a Judge; *Shall he doe wickedly? shall he commit iniquity?*

Hence note.

It is an abomination for Judges to doe unjustly.

Judges have justice, as it were, in their keeping; they have the charge of justice; is it not an abomination for the keepers or protectors of Justice to violate it! *Elihu* having thus denied unrighteousnesse or any iniquity in God, proceeds to the proofe of it. To deny had been enough in this matter, but he gives a demonstration; as severall have been held out already in prosecuting the former observation, so the following text holds out another.

Vers. 11.

Verſ. 11. *For the worke of a man ſhall he render unto him, and cauſe every man to find according to his waye.*

As if he had ſaid, God doth every man right, therefore he is righteous, and there is no iniquity in him.

Elihu having denyed any unrighteouſneſs to be in God, here ſheweth how he exerciſeth righteouſneſſe.

The worke of a man ſhall he render to him.

The work of a man is here put for the reward, iſſue, or fruit of his work; God doth not render every mans work to him in kind, that is, the thing it ſelfe which he hath done, but the work in its reſult and reward. That which God returneth to a man according to his work, may be called a reward in a fourfold reſpect. Firſt, becauſe it hath in it the benefit of a reward to the worker. Secondly, becauſe it is given in anſwer to the work done. Thirdly, becauſe God hath given his people leave, yea a command to beleeve and waite for good fruit to themſelves, when they doe good works. Fourthly, becauſe it is proportion'd to the work or duty performed. For as good is returned for good, ſo great good is returned for great good done. Though the greateſt good that ever was or can be done by a meere creature doth not deſerve (by any intrinſick worth) the leaſt good at the hand of God. Thus ſaith the Spirit (*Rev.* 14. 13.) *Bleſſed are the dead that dye in the Lord, from hence forth they reſt from their labours, and their works follow them*; not the workes which they did, but that which is by promiſe due to them for thoſe workes. The Prophet aſſureth us (*Iſa.* 32. 17.) *The work of righteouſneſs is peace*; we cannot underſtand it as a direct predication, but peace is the fruit or iſſue of the worke of righteouſneſs, or as the latter part of the verſe clearly expounds it, *The effect of righteouſneſſe ſhall be quietneſs and aſſurance for ever*. Which as it is moſt true of the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, *who is our peace* (Epheſ. 2. 14.) and our *Peacemaker through the blood of his croſs* (Col. 1. 20.) So it is true of mans righteouſneſs, the work whereof is (by promiſe) crowned with the bleſſings of peace, both ſpirituall and corporall, temporall and eternall. *The work of a man*

Shall

Shall he render unto him.

The word ſignifies a full retribution, it ſignifies alſo, in the Noune, *peace*; becauſe when accounts are fully returned or rendred all is ſetled and quiet; when a man upon account is diſcharged, he hath a *quietus eſt*, that is an acquittance wherein he may be quiet; none can legally moleſt or trouble him. That which God will returne to all men, they muſt and ſhall reſt in, though that which he will render to man for his evill works unrepented of, will give him no reſt.

שלם *reddere ad pacem pertinet; quæ loquutio ſignificat perfectam debiti alicujus perſolutionem.* Bold:

The work of a man ſhall he render unto him.

The word is very generall; he doth not ſay this, that, or 'tother worke, but *the work*, which is as much as an univerſall, *every work of a man*, his good works, and his bad works, his open works, and his ſecret works, his great and leſſer works, there is not the leaſt graine of a mans works, that ſhall be unanſwered or un-returned to him; and, when the Text ſaith *the work of a man &c.* we are not to take works in an excluſive ſence, either firſt, as to words, as if God would render to man his works, but not his words; mans words will come to an account as well as his works; they muſt be anſwered for whether good or bad. (*Math.* 12. 36, 37.) *For every idle word, that men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give account thereof in the day of judgment; for by thy words thou ſhalt be juſtified, and by thy words thou ſhalt be condemned*; that is, it ſhall be rendered to thee according to thy words, or as thy words have been, ſo it ſhall be with thee. Nor ſecondly, are we to take the works of a man, excluſively, or in oppoſition to his thoughts; as if God would render to man what he hath acted outwardly, but not what he hath acted inwardly, or would paſſe by his thoughts. We muſt give an account of our thoughts, which are the ſpring of our works as well as of our words, which are the publiſhers and proclaimers of them. *God ſhall bring every work* (ſaith *Solomon*, Eccl. 12. 14.) *to judgment, and every ſecret thing*, the moſt ſecret whiſpers of the tongue, and the moſt ſecret plottings, contrivings, deviſings, deſignings, yea the ſimple and ſingle thinkings of the heart. Theſe are not only the moulds and principles of every work, but every one of theſe is a work, and all of them the whole work of the inner man; whoſe work, or what is wrought there, is

 chiefly

chiefly, as well as only, under the inspection and eye of God.

Againe, *The work of a man shall he render unto him, &c.* He doth not say the works of another man shall he render to any man, but the work of a man shall he render to him; he that doth the work shall have the reward; the works of one man shall not be rendered to another, but every mans own works shall. As the faith of another man shall not help us, if we have no faith; *Abrahams* faith (who had a mighty faith) will doe us no good, if we have no faith of our own, so the good works of another man shall doe us no good if we have none of our own. And as not the good works, so the evill works of others, shall not be rendered to us. The hurtfull works of others shall not hurt us, if we doe no hurt. I grant we may partake of the evill works of others, yea, we may make other mens works our own, either by consenting to them before they are done, or by approving them after they are done, or by not reproving them, when we have opportunity. In these and many other cases, we may make other mens evill works our own; and so farre as other mens works are our own, God shall render them also unto us: Hence that caution given by the Apostle to *Timothy* (1 *Tim.* 5. 22.) *Lay hands suddainly on no man, neither be partaker of other mens sins, keep thy self pure.* They that partake (in any of those wayes mentioned before, or in any other way) of any mans sins may also quickly partake of his punishment. Thus *John heard a voyce from Heaven* (Rev. 18. 4.) *saying come out of her* (that is, out of Babylon) *my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.* Not only is that work ours which we doe, but that also may be ours, by participation, which others do. And by what title soever a work becomes any mans, *the worke of the man shall God render unto him.*

And he will cause every man to find according to his wayes.

This latter part of the verse containes the same thing with the former in another cloathing of words.

In semita virt inveniet eum.

Some read the Text thus, *and he will find every man in his way*; let man goe in what way he will, God will meet with him. That's a truth, God will meet or find a man in a good way to incourage guide, assist and reward him. And God will meet or find a man in an evill way, to stop, oppose and punish him. God will find every

every man in his way, and man shall find God to him according as the way is wherein he findeth him.

We render very well, and fully to the sence, *he will cause every man to find according to his way.*

I find an Interpreter over-curiously distinguishing between a mans *work* and his *way*, which doubtlesse here, in effect, are the same, yet there may be a graduall differer-ce; *work* being taken for this or that particular act, and *way*, for a continued course either good or evill. Cajetanus.

דרך *via, actiones significat quatenus ad finem diriguntur; Quemadmodum via initur metu et termini causa. Emphatice via dicuntur actiones ad certum finem directæ.* Coc:

Againe, The *way* of a man may be considered in association with his ends. Every man goeth such or such a way for some speciall end; no man takes a step in any way without a purpose, nor doth any wise or good man take a step in any way without a good purpose. Yet there is (*finis operis*) an end or issue of the work, as also (*finis operantis*) an end proposed by the worker. And oftentimes that proves to be the end of a work which was not the end purposed by the worker. The end of a mans work or way, proves sometimes better and sometimes worser then he proposed. Possibly a man may not find according to that end of his way and work which he intended not, whether good or evill. But assuredly whatsoever good or evill end a man proposeth to himself, when he enters upon his work or way, God will cause him to find accordingly. So that when *Elihu* saith, *God will cause every man to find according to his way*, he intimates, that God will not only render to man according to the matter of his work, or outward path of his way, but well considereth every mans scope and intendment, or what he would have his work issue in, and causeth him to find as he findeth that to be. As the end which man proposeth to himselfe, hath a great influence upon his way, so upon his account with God about it. This is a good sence. God will cause every man to find according to his way, both as his way is taken for the matter or course of his actions, as also for the scope and design of them.

Hence Observe, First.

Every man shall have according to what he hath done.

Our receivings will be according to our layings out, whether good or evill. God is so farre from doing any man wrong, that every man shall have his due reward. (*Psal.* 62. 12.) *Also to thee*

thee O Lord belongeth mercy, for thou renderest to every man according to his work. And leſt any ſhould hope to eſcape the evill which at leaſt ſome of their evill works deſerve by the ſecrecy of them, that hope is quite daſhed becauſe God is the ſearcher and ſeer not only of our works but of our hearts (*Prov.* 24. 12.) *Doth not he that pondereth the heart conſider it, and he that keepeth the ſoul, doth not he know it?* (what followes?) *and ſhall not he render to every man according to his works?* *Solomon* ſpeaks in that place of ſuch as make excuſes to ſhift themſelves off from acts of charity; they will ſay, we know not whether it be ſo with him or no; poſſibly he may not be in ſuch want as he pretendeth. Take heed of theſe cloaks of covetouſneſſe, and pitifull pleas to ſave your purſes from ſhewing pity to the poor, for (ſaith *Solomon*) *Will not God ſearch it out, and render to every man according to his worke?* The holy Scripture abounds in this poynt. Read *Jer.* 32. 19. *Ezek.* 33. 10. *Rom.* 2. 6. 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. 1 *Pet.* 1. 17. *Rev.* 22. 12.

But ſome may ſay, how doth God render to every man his work? Is it not ſaid *He juſtifieth the ungodly* (Rom. 4. 5.) Are the works of an ungodly man rendred to him, when he is juſtified?

I anſwer, it is one thing what God will do through free grace, and another what he will deale out in ſtrictneſſe of Juſtice. The Apoſtle ſpeaks in that place of the free grace of God to ſinners, not of his Juſtice againſt ſinners. Secondly, though God juſtifieth the ungodly, yet he never juſtifieth ungodlineſſe; or, though he juſtifieth a man who hath done many evill works, yea all whoſe works are evill, yet he never juſtifieth nor rewardeth the work of an evill man. Thirdly, God acts according to juſtice and righteouſneſs where he juſtifieth the ungodly; he doth not ſhew favour to the ungodly in his own wrong. Acts of grace from God are not oppoſite to his Juſtice, much leſſe doe they contradict or overthrow it. He doth not juſtifie an ungodly man in himſelfe, or meerly conſidered in his ungodlineſſe, but he juſtifieth him in the righteouſneſs of another, even of Jeſus Chriſt, who hath given full ſatisfaction to the Juſtice of God with reſpect to the ungodly whom he juſtifieth. Laſtly, we may ſay, that God renders the work of an ungodly man to him when he juſtifieth him; for though then he hath not done, nor ever can doe any works which deſerve the

the juſtification of his perſon; yet God doth render to him, according to that preſent work of faith in cloſing with the promiſe and the work of Chriſts righteouſneſſe therein tendered to him, and applyed by him for his juſtification.

Further, that other Scripture ſeems to lye in the way of this obſervation (*Pſal.* 103. 10.) *He hath not dealt with us after our ſins, or rewarded us according to our iniquities.* How then doth God render every man his work?

I anſwer as before; Acts of mercy do not croſs acts of juſtice. When the Lord doth not deal with any man according to his ſins, it is becauſe he hath freely pardoned his ſins; and he doth not reward a man according to his iniquity, becauſe his iniquities are done away; thus he deals with all his own people, who are received to favour through Jeſus Chriſt; but no wicked man, no impenitent perſon in the world, ſhall have cauſe to ſay, that God hath not dealt with him according to his ſin, or hath not rewarded him according to his iniquity. There may be ſome preſent ſtops of Juſtice, through the patience of God to wicked men; their works are not always preſently rendered into their boſomes, but they ſhall. God will render to every man according to his work, one way or other, one time or other; The full rendering to all men according to their works will be at the great day; in this world the godly doe not ſomtimes receive according to their good works, nor doe the wicked according to their evill works; Good men are often rewarded with ſhame and reproach, with want and poverty, with baniſhment and impriſonment, with tortures and with death in this preſent world; but the Lord will have a time to render to them according to their workes, though at no time for their works; ſo look upon wicked men, and their workes, they goe often unpuniſhed at the preſent, yea many of them proſper greatly (as I have had occaſion to ſhew more then once in opening this Book) they have their good things, many good things in this life, but the time will come when God will render to the wicked their work, and they ſhall be forced to ſay, that he hath cauſed them to find according to their wayes. Take two or three inferences from this generall truth.

If God will render the work of a man to him; Then

Firſt, Godly men have great encouragement to doe good, yea to abound in doing good workes. That's the Apoſtles argu-

ment

men: (1 *Cor:* 15. 58.) *Be ye stedfast and unmoveable in the worke of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vaine in the Lord*; that is, the Lord will render to every man his labour. Hence also that of *Solomon* (Eccl: 11. 1.) *Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many dayes.* Charities done in faith as an holy offering to God, produce a sure encrease. To give with a right heart to the poore, is the best way of growing rich. For God will render to man according to that work. And as it may incourage to doe good, so to doe it against all discouragements. We must not only doe good when the Sun shines, when it is faire weather with us, and all men applaud us; but though men frowne and scorne, though (which *Solomon* reports as one of the great vanities of this world, *Eccl:* 4. 4.) *For a right worke, a man be envied of his neighbour*; let us not hold our hand from doing good, though we are opposed and checkt, though we are traduced and slandred, though we are mis-interpreted and have the foulest glosses put upon our fairest workes, though men call our zeale madnesse and our circumspect walking hypocrisie, yea though we are persecuted and suffer the worst of evills, though men cast stones at us (as they did at Christ for his good workes) yet let us not be deterred from doing good. For howsoever men deale with us, or what rendrings soever we find from the world, yet God will render to us both according to the rightnesse of our worke done, and according to the uprightnesse of our hearts in doing it. Let this provoke us not only to doe the Lords worke, but to doe it with much patience, and perseverance, for *in due time we shall reape if we faint not*; where there hath been sowing, there will be reaping; and where the seed time hath been with teares, the harvest or reaping time shall be with joy.

Secondly, This is a dreadfull doctrine to *evill workers*; Some (as the Apostle calls the *Cretians*, out of their owne Prophet) *are evill beasts, slow bellyes*; and as they are slothfull, or slow bellyes at doing good: so they are very free and forward, very quicke, lively, and nimble beasts in doing evill. O how should evill workers tremble at this Scripture, *To every man will God render according to his worke*; as a cup of cold water given to a disciple, in the name of a disciple, shall not be lost, but have a reward, and the giver fully payd for it; (*Math:* 10. 42.) so not any the least evill worke, impenitently continued in, shall be unpunished. Further,

Further, God will not render to man according to the opinion he hath of himselfe. (A bad man and the worst of his workes may be good in his owne conceit; *He may flatter himselfe in his owne eyes, untill his iniquity be found to be hatefull*, Psal: 36. 2.) But God will render unto man according to what his workes are in truth.

Secondly, God will not render to man according to the thoughts which others have of him and of his work (some are high in the opinion not only of the world, but of some Good men, they have a name to be alive while they are dead, and their workes dead workes) but God will render to man according to that cleare, certaine, and infallible knowledge, which himselfe (by whom *actions are weighed*, 1 Sam: 2. 3.) hath of them.

Thirdly, God will not render to man according to his good meanings, when his workes are evill; many will confesse they have done amisse, but they had good intendments in it. A right end will not excuse us, if our way be wrong; There is no pleading of meanings against commandements; nor will sincerity of intentions, cover the deformity and irregularity of actions. The Apostle pronounceth a fearefull doome against those who sayd (*Rom:* 3. 8.) *Let us doe evill that good may come, whose damnation is just.*

Fourthly, As God will not render according to a mans good ends, if his worke be evill; so remember, God will not render to man according to his good workes, if his ends are bad. Therefore, consider your end when you enter your way, and begin your worke. (*Pro:* 21. 27.) *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord*; *how much more when he bringeth it with an evill mind*; that is, when he hath some bad end in doing it; A wicked mans sacrifice is an abomination to the Lord at the best, but much more when he hath base designes in his sacrifices or holy services. *Herod* sayd to the wise men (*Math:* 3. 8.) *Goe and search diligently for the young child, and when ye have found him bring me word againe, that I may come and worship him also*: It was a good worke to enquire after Christ, and worship him, but his end was to destroy him. *Jezebel* pretended a holy fast, but her end was to feast her selfe with revenge upon innocent *Naboth*. The best workes of hypocrites will have an ill returne, because they doe them with an evill mind. There are three sorts of good workes, which will never turne to a good account. First,

Firſt, Thoſe good works which are done but for a ſeaſon; temporary good workes, or the good workes of temporary profeſſors, ſuch as are deſcribed (*Math:* 13.5.7.) by the 2d and 3d grounds, who bring forth for a while, but afterwards fall away; ſuch good workes (I ſay) ſhall not have a good reward. If your goodneſs be as the morning cloud, and as the early dew it paſſeth away, it will doe you no good. *He that endureth to the end ſhall be ſaved*, and none but he (*Math:* 10. 22.) Chriſt exhorts the Church (*Rev:* 3. 11.) *Hold that faſt which thou haſt, that no man take thy crowne.* They looſe the good workes they have done, who hold not out in doing them. It will not advantage us to begin in the Spirit, if we end in the fleſh.

Secondly, Thoſe good works which are truſted to, or boaſted of, will never make a good returne. Though a man ſhould continue doing good all the dayes of his life, yet if he buildeth his hope upon it, *his hope ſhall be cut off, and his truſt* (that is, what he truſteth to) *ſhall be a ſpiders web* (that is, weake like that, becauſe like that, woven out of his owne bowels) *he ſhall leane upon his houſe, but it ſhall not ſtand, he ſhall hold it faſt, but it ſhall not endure* (Job 8. 14, 15.) you and your workes will periſh together, if you depend upon your workes. Good workes truſted to, are as dangerous to the ſoule, as evill workes perſevered in.

Thirdly, Thoſe good workes which are done for baſe ends, to ſerve men, or to compaſſe a worldly intereſt, ſhall have no reward from God, but that, which ſhall be upon every ſoule that ſinneth and repenteth not, anguiſh and tribulation.

JOB,

JOB. Chap. 34. Verſ. 12, 13.

Yea, ſurely God will not doe wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert Judgement.

Who hath given him a charge over the earth? or who hath diſpoſed the whole world?

ELihu proceedeth in the proofe of this poynt, (the vindication of the righteouſneſſe of God) with a ſtrong aſſeveration.

Verſ. 12. *Yea, ſurely.*

There is a mighty force of affirmation, in the originall words, אף אמנם we may parallel them, with thoſe aſſertive ſpeeches frequently uſed by our Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt* in the Goſpel, *Amen, Amen, Verily, verily I ſay unto you*; *Yea ſurely*, is as much as *verily, verily*; as if *Elihu* had ſayd, *There is no queſtion to be made of what I affirme, that God is righteous, or will not doe wickedly*; as the Apoſtle writ to *Timothy* about the great myſtery of the Goſpel, *God manifeſted in the fleſh*, (1 Tim: 3. 16.) *without controverſie great* (or, as the word imports, confeſſedly on all hands, *great*) *is the myſtery of Godlineſſe*; ſo here *Elihu* might ſpeak to *Job*, *This is a truth beyond diſpute or controverſie, an unqueſtionable truth, and ſuch a truth that, if once confeſſed, will quickly determine all the Queſtions, which are depending between you and me.* There are ſome *Maſter-truths, ruling truths*; ſuch a one is this in the text, *Yea ſurely, or undoubtedly, God will not doe wickedly.* *Ingens eſt in originali aſſertionis vis.*

Hence note.

It becomes us to grow up into higheſt confidences, about the truths of God, eſpecially about the truth and Juſtice of God.

We ſhould not be as meteors hanging in the ayre, ſpeaking with heſitation, poſſibly it is ſo, peradventure it is true; but (as the Apoſtle directs the *Coloſſians*, Chap. 2. 3.) *We muſt labour to grow up unto all riches of the full aſſurance of underſtanding*; as there is a full aſſurance of faith in believing, & of hope in waiting or expecting, ſo alſo of underſtanding in apprehending the things of God. We ſhould be (in a ſenſe) *Maſters of truth*; and then

we are so indeed, when truth hath fully mattered us, and prevailed upon both our judgement and affections, and we are led captive by light to the love and obedience of it. We have cause to bewayle those (much more have they cause to bewayle themselves) who are but Scepticks or Questionists in Religion, never coming to a point, nor able (after a due making up of their thoughts) to say, *Thus it is, and by this we will abide*, as *Elihu* did in the then present case, delivering himselfe confidently, *yea surely*, or *verily, verily*,

God will not doe wickedly.

To cleare the meaning in this Negative assertion, we must take in the highest affirmatives of the holinesse and Justice, of the righteousnesse, truth, and faithfulnesse of God; For it sounds like a flat and low commendation of God, to say, *he will not doe wickedly*; for so it may be sayd of every honest man, *He will not do wickedly*; but seeing in this Negative commendation given by man to God (as in all the Negative commandements given by God to man) all affirmatives are to be understood; what can be sayd more to or more sound out his praise and glory then this?

God will not doe wickedly?

רשׁע *est aliquando impium pronunciare, condemnare; aliquando vero impiè agere vel iniquè quippiam facere.* Merc.

The word here used for *doing wickedly*, signifies two things; First, to pronounce any person wicked; and Secondly, to doe any thing which is wicked; both these often meete together. For in many cases to pronounce a person wicked, is to doe a wicked thing; he that condemneth a just person, pronounceth him wicked, and what thing can be done more wickedly then that? Some take the word in that sence here, as a deniall that God either hath done, or ever will condemne the innocent. There are two things wherein men doe very wickedly, with respect to the persons of men, both which the Lord abhorres. First, when they condemne the innocent. Secondly, when they acquit or cleare the guilty. The former way of doing wickedly, is chiefly removed from God here by *Elihu*, as the latter is directly and expresly by himselfe (*Exod:* 34. 7.) *The Lord, the Lord*, &c. *that will by no meanes cleare the guilty*. To pronounce a guilty person innocent, or an innocent person guilty, if ignorantly done, is a great piece of weaknesse, and if knowingly done, is a great piece of wickednesse. Yet,

Yet, because the latter part of the verse speakes particularly to cleare God from wrong Judgement, therefore, I conceive, we may better expound this former part of it more largely, as a generall deniall of any evill act whatsoever, done by God. *Surely God will not doe wickedly*,

Neither will the Almighty pervert Judgement.

The Almighty, who hath power to doe what he will, hath no will to doe this evill. He will not *pervert Judgement*. The word עות *detorquet, bit curvabit.* signifies both to pervert and subvert, as also to bow, wrest, or put out of order, to mingle or blend those things together, which should be for ever separated, or, as we say, to mingle heaven and earth, yea heaven and hell together; so doe they who mingle good and ill, right and wrong together. To pervert *Judgement*, is, to doe all this, for then (which *Abraham* assured himselfe was farre from God, *Gen:* 18. 25.) *The righteous are as the wicked*, that is, the righteous fare as ill as the wicked, or the wicked fare as well as the righteous. But *the Almighty will not pervert Judgement*, that is, the right which belongs to any man, and therefore, he will doe every man right. We had the same position in termes (*Chap:* 8. 3d) and we have had this whole verse equivalently in the 10th of this Chapter, where *Elihu* sayd, *Far be it from God, that he should doe wickednesse, and from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity*. Here, only one verse intervening, *Elihu* reports and repeats the same matter againe; but it is no nice fleshe or vaine repetition, for which Christ reproved the prayer of the Heathens (*Matth:* 6. 7.) there are many repetitions in Scripture, but not one vaine one; how often soever the same truth is repeated there, it hath its weight and use, not only as it is still a truth, but as it is a truth repeated. And therefore I shall give a threefold reason why this truth is here againe repeated, which will also lead us to a fuller improvement of it.

First, Because this truth is (as it were) the hinge upon which the whole controversie between *Job* and *Elihu* is turned. *Job* was unsatisfied because he was so ill handled, and therefore *Elihu* tells him often that God is righteous, and that he will not wrong any man. Hereby giving *Job* to understand, that God had done him nothing, or done nothing to him, but right. Such grand swaying controling truths should be often, and can scarce be too often repeated.

Secondly, *Elihu* repeated this againe, becauſe 'tis ſuch a truth, as no man can too much, no nor enough weigh and conſider the value and worth of it. Now, that which cannot be too often nor too much thought of, cannot (if rules of prudence be obſerved) be too much or too often ſpoken of. There is ſcarce any man who hath not ſometimes at leaſt indirectly and obliquely ſome hard thoughts of the proceedings of God, either in reference to himſelfe or to others; Nor is there any thing that we have more temptations about, then that, ſurely, we are not in all things rightly dealt with, and that the diſpenſations of God are not ſo even, as they might. Theſe ſinfull ſuſpicions are dayly moving and fluctuating in the heart of man, and therefore this oppoſite principle ought to be faſtened and fixed there to the utmoſt, that the will and workes of God are all juſt and righteous, yea that his will is the rule of all righteous workings; or, that as whatſoever is done in this world, is done by the diſpoſure of God, ſo God (though the thing be evill and unjuſt) is juſt and good in the diſpoſure of it. Therefore unleſſe we reſiſt or contradict the will of God, we muſt ſay, whatſoever comes to paſſe, comes righteouſly to paſſe, becauſe it comes to paſſe by the determinate will and counſell of God.

Thirdly, *Elihu* repeates this aſſertion, that he might the more commodiouſly make his tranſition or paſſage to the matter following, and proſecute it with greater ſucceſſe. And therefore I ſhall not ſtay longer upon thoſe words, only.

Note.

Firſt, This great truth, that *God will not doe wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert Judgement*, convinceth thoſe, not only of injudiciouſneſſe, but of wickedneſſe, who, though they are ready to acknowledge in generall, *God is juſt*, yet as to thoſe particular providences, which concerne them, or wherewith themſelves are pincht, doe not, cannot acquieſce and reſt in the will of God, with freedome and ſatisfaction. That which is juſt ſhould not diſpleaſe us, though (in it ſelfe) it be very bitter and unpleaſant to us.

Secondly, This truth is a ground of comfort to all the people of God, who are under heavy preſſures from this evill world, or who receive little reward or incouragement (as to ſenſe) from the good hand of God. Such are apt to ſay with the kingly Prophet (*Pſal:* 73. 13, 14.) *Verily in vaine have we cleanſed our heart, and waſhed our hands in innocency, for all the day long have we been plagued, and chaſtened every morning.* *David* was under a temptation when he was under hatches, he could hardly perceive it worth the while to take paines in cleanſing and waſhing either heart or hand while God was ſo conſtant and frequent in correcting and chaſtening him with ſo heavy a hand. Yet *David* ſoone after recovered out of this temptation, and concluded the Pſalme, with this particular aſſurance, (*v.* 28.) *It is good for me to draw neere to God*, as he had begun it (*v.* 1.) with a generall aſſurance, *Truely God is good to Iſrael, even to ſuch as are of a cleane heart.* God is good to thoſe who have a cleane heart, even when they are in the greateſt ſufferance of evill, and therefore they who are cleane hearted, have no reaſon at any time to ſay, nor ſhall they long ſay, they have cleanſed their heart in vaine. Though now they ſmart, yet in due ſeaſon they ſhall be well rewarded for their waſhing. *The Judgements of God are ſuch, as no man can fully comprehend, ſuch as no man can juſtly reprehend. The Almighty will not pervert Judgement.*

Judicia dei plenè nemo comprehendit, juſtè nemo reprehendit. Auguſt: lib: 2. de Civ: Dei. cap: 23.

Thoſe foure things which cauſe men to pervert Judgement, are at the furtheſt diſtance or remove from God; whereof the firſt is envie at the good condition of others. The ſecond is groundleſſe and unreaſonable love or hatred of their perſons. The third is feare of frownes from thoſe that are great, or feare of after-claps; Many are deterr'd from giving but a juſt meaſure, either of reward to good men, or puniſhment to evill men, leſt themſelves ſhould receive hard meaſure from thoſe who like neither. The fourth is hope of gaine, or their private advantage. For as ſome pervert Judgement for bribes already received, ſo others for bribes promiſed, or upon expectation of ſome future favours. Now God (I ſay) is infinitely above theſe foure, and all other imaginable by-reſpects, upon which Judgement is perverted every day, by the ſons of men. God is above all envy, yea above all that hatred or love which perverts Judgement; he is above all feare of evill, and hope of good. God hath nothing to feare, ſeeing none can reach him, much leſſe hurt him; neither hath he any thing at all to hope for, ſeeing he is in the full poſſeſſion of all happineſſe and bleſſedneſſe, that is, of himſelfe. Why then, or upon what account ſhould the Almighty pervert Judge-

Judgement? so that, if at any time, we have any unbecoming thoughts of the Justice of God, either that he afflicts the good without reason, or prospers the wicked against it; all this ariseth from our ignorance, or the shortnesse of our sight. We have not a full or perfect prospect of things, we see but a little way backward, we are not wise to compare what's past with what's present, nor can we at all infallibly foresee any thing future, or discerne what shall be. Whereas God at once hath all things before him, he seeth what is past as well as what is present, and what shall be hereafter, as well as what hath been, and so the compleatnesse and indefectibility of his owne Justice in all. And when we in the great day shall see all the workes of God in the world brought and presented together as in one view, we shall then say from the evidence of sight, as now we ought from the evidence of faith, that the Almighty hath not in any one thing perverted Judgement. And therefore the Apostle doth most excellently and appositely call that day, *The day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God* (Rom: 2. 5.)

Elihu having strongly asserted, with a *yea surely*, that, *the Almighty will not pervert Judgement*, yet stayeth not in a bare (though so strong an) assertion, (which he might) but gives us the proofe and confirmation of it; as he hath denied that God will, so he proveth by undeniable arguments, that God will not doe wickedly, that the Almighty will not pervert Judgement. And this he doth in the next or 13th verse, and the two that follow.

Vers. 13. *Who hath given him a charge over the earth? or who hath disposed the whole world?*

These words, (as was intimated before) are an argument proving that God neither hath nor can doe wrong; That (as to the case in hand) he had not done *Job* wrong, yea, that, (as to all cases) he can wrong no man. This argument is grounded upon the soveraignty, supremacy, or absolute authority of God over all men. The summe and force of it may be gathered up into this forme.

He cannot doe injustice to any, who of right hath an absolute power arising from and residing in himselfe to doe what he will with or towards all men.

But

But God hath such a power, Therefore he cannot doe any injustice. That, God hath such an absolute power arising from and residing in himselfe *Elihu* proves by a kind of Challenge.

Who hath given him a Charge over the earth?

Produce the man, let him shew his face, if he dareth. It is an expression of the same importance with that of the Apostle (*Rom:* 8. 33.) *Who shall lay any thing to the Charge of Gods Elect?* let us see the man, let us see the devill, that shall so lay any thing to the Charge of Gods Elect, as to prevaile in his Charge; 'tis also like that other triumphant query, in the same Chapter (*v.* 31.) *If God be with us, who can be against us?* That is, who can be so against us as to hurt us, or carry the day against us? Thus here; *Who hath given him a Charge over the world?* let us see who; As if he had sayd, *Are there any above God, from whom he deriveth his power? Or have any committed the Government of the earth to him as his trust and charge, for the manner whereof he is to be accountable unto them? Surely no. And if no, then either God is just, or all the world must be in confusion or under oppression without any redresse or remedy.* Mr *Broughton* renders, *Who before him looked to the earth?* We say, *Who hath given him a Charge over the earth?* The ordinary signification of the word, *is to visit*, and that

sequens פקד *sumitur pro Jubere juxta morem Syriaci hinc* בקידים *praefecti.* Merc:

First, In a way of favour, to see what others want (so we visit the poore) or how they doe, so we usually visit the sick, and sometimes those that are well in health.

Secondly, It signifieth to visit in a way of judgement, or to punish those that have done amisse. Thus the Lord threatens to visit (that is, to punish) the iniquity of the fathers upon the children (*Exod:* 20. 5.)

Thirdly, The word signifieth to command, to issue out orders, to give a charge. This signification of the word is very frequent both in Scripture, and in dayly use. Visiters (we know) have power of Government; yea they have power over Governours to order and give them a charge, that they doe, or to examine whether they have done the duty of their place. In this latter sence, we render it here, *Who hath given him a Charge over the earth?* And so we read it (2 *Chron:* 36. 23.) *Thus saith Cyrus King of Persia, all the kingdomes of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven*

heaven given me. And he hath charged me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah; who is there among you of all his people, The Lord his God be with him, and let him goe up. God hath charged me (saith *Cyrus*) or he hath made that my businesse, a businesse incumbent upon me, to build him a house in *Jerusalem*, that is, to further the worke, to give the *Jewes* leave to build the Temple of *Jerusalem*; God hath charged me with this great trust, and I am willing to answer it. The same thing is recorded, almost in the same words (*Ezra* 1. 2.) *Thus saith Cyrus King of Persia, the Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he hath Charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.* God giveth Princes their Charge, supreame soveraigne Princes, yea he giveth inferiour Princes and Magistrates, their Charge; but (saith *Elihu*) *Who hath given him a Charge?* Certainly, no man. There is yet a twofold reading of this former part of the verse, both considerable.

First, Thus; *Who for him hath visited the earth?* As if it had been sayd, Hath God set any to visit, or to look to the earth for him, as if himselfe stood by and did nothing; God useth the power of man; he sets up Magistrates to worke for him; but he never puts the worke out of his owne hand, nor doth he need any hand to helpe him in that worke, though he useth many: and though he saith, *By me* (yea for me) *Kings reigne*, yet we may say with *Elihu* (in the notion now exprest) *Who for him hath visited the earth?* that's a good reading.

Secondly, *Who over him doth visit the earth?* Is God any *mans Vicegerent?* is he *a Lord Deputy, or a Viceroy?* No, there is no man visits the earth over him, for, (as we render clearely) *Who hath given him a Charge over the earth?* As if he had sayd, *If God be an unjust Judge, is there any superiour Judge to whom we may appeale for remedy or redresse of our injuries?* Who over him visiteth, or, *who hath given him a charge over*

the earth.

That is, over the inhabitants of the earth, or over the affayres of the earth. The Earth, by a Synecdoche of the Continent for the matter contained, is here put for all persons and transactions over the face of the whole earth. Who hath layd that great Charge, the disposall of all things and people in the earth upon God?

God? surely no man on earth, no Angel in heaven, nor all of them put together. How should God derive a governing power from them, who derive their very power of being from him? He governes in his owne right, not by commission or deputation. We have the same poynt affirmed at the 36th Chapter of this Booke, *v.* 23 d, *Who hath enjoyned him his way?* God knoweth and taketh his owne way, no man sheweth, much lesse commandeth him his way; *Who hath given him a Charge over the earth?*

Or who hath disposed the whole world?

This Question, as the former, containes a Negation; no Creature, none besides God hath disposed of the whole world, or of all of the world. Mr *Broughton* renders, *Who hath setled all the dwelt land?* The word which we translate *disposed*, signifies to place with a kind of art, exactly, orderly, carefully; *Who hath thus disposed the whole world?* There is a double disposition of the world.

שם *posuit arte, cura, et ordine, quod est disposuit.*

First, In Creation; who hath disposed, joynted, and put the whole world in frame? who hath marshall'd the severall parts of the world as they now stand like the Host of God? The world as created is expressed in the Greek by *beauty and order*; before God perfected the creation, all was a confused heape without *forme and voyd*; But that rude indigested matter was drawne forth in the severall works of that six-dayes Creation, into a most beautifull forme and order. Thus God once disposed all the world by Creation.

Secondly, God dayly disposeth the world by providence; And that's the disposure which this text especially speakes of; *Who hath disposed* (in a providentiall way) *the whole world?* The word rendred *world*, properly signifies, *the habitable world*; we find it opposed to the wildernesse or desert (*Isa:* 14. 17.) where few or none inhabite. That word is very significantly used here for the world, because the habitable part of the world, or where men inhabite, are the stages on which the providences of God appear, and act most eminently & convincingly; *Who hath disposed of the habitable world?* which the Greekes call, *The house of abiding*: Mr *Broughton*, *The dwelt land*, that is, the land wherein men dwell.

תבל *orbis habitabilis, ὀικουμένην vocant. i. e. homines degentes in orbe habitabili.* Pisc:

Againe, As the earth, before, is put for the inhabitants and occurrences of the earth; so whatsoever passeth, or is brought to

 passe

passe in the world, is here called the world. *Who hath disposed the whole world?* He that made the whole world, disposeth of the whole world, providence followeth Creation.

But some may say, Is this a good Argument to prove that God is just, because he hath the supreame power over all the world? Will it follow, that he administreth all things rightly, because he hath a right to administer all things? There seemes but little of Argument in this, (may some say) many have a great deale of power, who abuse it, and they that have most power, usually abuse it most, and make it but a servant to their lusts and passions; therefore how is it a proofe, that the Lord is righteous and will doe no iniquity, because he hath the power of all things in his hand, or is Lord over all?

I answer. This is a strong argument, and (as I remember a good Author calls it) *a peremptory argument*, which can have no deniall. The Lord is righteous, because he is Lord over all; he is not King of some corner of the World, he is not King of the whole World by election or vote of the World, he is not chosen at all, much lesse (as many have been) by evill means and wicked combinations; God is the supreame governer of all the world by naturall right not choyce; yet not (as some Princes are) by naturall right of succession inheriting after a mortall father; but by the naturall right of creation, himself being the father of that world over which he is a governour. The Originall of Gods power is stated in himself; The eternall being of God, and his supreame authority are inseparable.

Yea, God is not only thus supreame in administring Justice; but he is the summe or fullnesse of Law and Justice, and therefore cannot pervert it. He whose power and goodnesse gave the world its being, how should he act any thing which is not good in the exercise of his power over the World! Injustice is the breach of a Law, but how can God break a Law who is the source and fountaine of all righteous Lawes? who then shall dare to suspect God of injustice, or require a reason why he doth this or that in the world, which himself hath made? yea, who hath not reason to admire and proclaime infinite goodnesse mixt with absolute power, as in his making so in his ruling the world? For whose sake or for fear of whom should he pervert Justice, who hath all men alike under his power?

Earthly

Earthly Judges may erre in judgment, but the Judge of all the earth cannot. God cannot doe injustice through ignorance or mistake; for he is omniscient and knoweth all things; nor can he have a will to doe unjustly, seeing his will is altogether just, and the rule or measure of all things that are just. As therefore he is not an idle Idol-god but most active in governing the World; so he is infinitely above the least failer in the government of it. The Sun shall sooner be turned into a cloud, and the morning light darken the earth, then any unrighteousnesse proceed from God; yea, *when clouds and darknesse are round about him* (that is, when we by reason either of the obscureneſse or afflictiveneſse of his dispensations can give no account of them, yet even then) *righteousnesse and judgment are the habitation of his Throne*; that is, his governing power abides unmoveably, or constantly (as in a habitation) within that blessed line and glorious spheare of righteousnesse. So then, the reasoning of *Elihu* from the universality and independency of the governing power of God, to the righteousnesse and equity of his government is not only probable, but demonstrative and unanswerable. He is alike mighty as the sole creator, and just as the supreame moderator of the World. If any man will presume to charge God with perverting judgment in governing the earth, that man saith in effect that he hath given God a charge over the earth; And if any man be so impiously and impudently presumptuous as to say that, let him come forth and answer this as peremptorily as truly denying question of *Elihu*; *Who hath given him a charge over the earth?*

Ipse quam patens est conditor tam pius est moderator. Hieron.

Hence Observe.

The power of God is a primitive or underived power.

His power is of himselfe; yea, his power is himself; God doth not rule by Commission or Deputation, all ruling power is fundamentally in him; as also the rule of that power, both which in God are one. Jesus Christ as Mediatour rules by Commission; *All things* (saith he, *Matth.* 11. 27.) *are delivered to me of my Father*. And againe, the Baptist gave this testimony of him (*John* 3. 35.) *The father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand*. Jesus Christ as Mediator receives his Charge from the Father, and he hath received a Charge over the whole earth, as Mediator. But consider him as God, so the government of the

world is fundamentally and essentially in him also. It is the highest honour of an earthly Prince, *when* (as it is sayd of the *Chaldeans* (*Hab:* 1.7.) *their Judgement and their dignity proceedeth of themselves*; that is, when they rule in their owne right, not in the right or by the designement of any other. How high then is the honour of God, who ruleth not only over all the people, but over all the Princes of the earth, his Judgement and dignity proceeding purely from himselfe!

Secondly, As the power of God is underived or proceeds only from himselfe; so the power of God is absolute and unlimited. His is in the strictest sense imaginable *supreame power*. Heathenish *Nebuchadnezzar* confessed this truth (*Dan:* 4. 35.) *Before him* (that is, before God) *all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing, and he doth according to his will in the Armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, and say to him what dost thou?* There's absolute power, none can say, that is, none may presume to say to him, *What doest thou?* no man ought to question, much lesse to quarrell at the determinations of God, whether concerning persons or nations; 'tis his right or prerogative to doe what he will; and how much soever he acts by prerogative, he will doe only that which is right; we may consider the absolute supremacy of God in a five-fold exercise of power.

First, In commanding; He commandeth what he pleaseth to be done; nor may his commands be disputed; they must be obeyed, because his.

Secondly, In prohibiting he forbiddeth whatsoever displeaseth him to be done. And how pleasing, how right soever any thing is in our eyes, yet if he forbiddeth it, we must for ever forbeare it. We all know by our owne smart how dangerous it is to eate of a forbidden Tree.

Thirdly, In suffering. I meane it not of any suffering evill in himselfe (God is infinitely above that) but of his suffering others to doe evill, or of his suffering any evill to be done. God may and doth permit, that which is nought, wicked, and unrighteous to be done in the world; and yet himselfe remaines altogether holy, righteous, just, and good. This is a great part of the transcendency of his power.

Fourthly, In rewarding; God hath absolute power, to reward;

ward; First, whom he will; Secondly, for what he will; Thirdly, in what kind he will; Fourthly, in what degree or measure he will; Fifthly, for how long he will, he can give (which none of the Princes of the earth can) everlasting rewards.

Fifthly, In punishing; God hath absolute power to punish, and the absoluteness of his power in punishing, may be exemplified in those five particulars, wherein his power of rewarding (in the former paragraph) was. In all these things we see the unlimitedness of the power of God, *Who hath given him a Charge over the earth? or who hath disposed the whole world?* Himselfe alone doth it, and he doth it of himselfe. And for as much as there is such a supremacy, such an absoluteness of power in God, take these three inferences from it.

First, How freely should we yeild our selves to the commands of God, not questioning this as unequall, nor saying that is hard? we are more apt to find fault with the work which God requires us to doe, then to remember that it is a great fault not to doe it. The heart of man naturally riseth against the will of God; *It is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be* (Rom: 8.7.) the wisdome of the flesh thinks there is some unrighteousnesse, at least some unreasonablenesse or rigour in the commands of God, and therefore such wise men hope they have reason on their side if they omit them or act against them. Any man will (at least he cannot but confesse he ought to) be subject unto that which is equall and right. Man hath no colour to disobey, till he hath put some blot upon the command. And seeing the commands of him who hath the charge over all the earth in himselfe and from himselfe, cannot possibly have any blot or defect in them, let us take heed we be not found disobeying.

Secondly, Seeing God hath the Charge of all the earth, we should as readily submit to his dispensations, works and dealings, as to his commands. The Jewes of old complained (*Ezek:* 18. 29.) *The way of the Lord is not equall*; They did even tell him to his face, his wayes were not equall, and therefore they would not submit. The Church in captivity spake well (*Lam:* 3. 28.) *Out of the mouth of the most high proceedeth not evill and good*; that is, whatsoever the Lord hath pronounced to doe or hath done concerning us, is morally good and not evill, though it be penally evill and not good. *Eli* spake wel also to this poynt

(1 *Sam:*

(1 *Sam:* 3. 18.) *It is the Lord, let him doe what ſeemes good in his owne eyes*; yet the thing which God was about to doe, was ſuch (*v.* 11.) as at which, *both the eares of every one that heard it ſhould tingle*. To have the heart quiet while the eares tingle, is pure ſubmiſſion. And any unquietneſs or murmurings at the dealings of God, whether reſpecting our perſons or our familyes, Churches, or Nations, are in ſome degree rebellions againſt the ſoveraigne power of God.

Thirdly, If the Lord be ſupreame, and have the charge over all the earth, then let us ſet him up as ſupreame in all things, let his ends be above our ends; let us deſigne God in all we doe; He who is over all, ought to be honoured by all. All our actions as ſo many lines ought to center in his honour, who is the Center of power. *Of him and through him and to him are all things*, ſaith the Apoſtle (*Rom:* 11. 36.) Becauſe all things are *of him*, creating them, and *through him*, governing them, therefore all things ſhould be *to him*, that is, all perſons ſhould in all things they doe, yea in all things that are done, ayme at and deſigne his glory, as the Apoſtle expreſſely concludeth the verſe before cited; *To whom be glory for ever*.

Thirdly, Whereas it is ſayd, *Who hath given him a Charge over the earth? or who hath diſpoſed* (not a part, or parcell, or canton, or corner of, but) *the whole world?*

Obſerve.

The power of God is an univerſall power.

It is extended throughout the world, to every patch and inch of it. What *David* ſaith of the Sun (*Pſal:* 19. 6.) *His going forth is from the end of heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the heate thereof*. The ſame may we ſay of the circuit of Gods power, there is nothing hid from, nor ſet beyond it. There is a four-fold univerſality of the power of God.

Firſt, In regard of perſons (*Pſal:* 97. 9.) *Thou Lord art high above all the earth, thou art exalted farre above all Gods*; that is, above the Kings and powers of the earth; whom the Scripture calleth Gods. If God hath a power over the Kings of the earth, then ſurely over the people of the earth; yea God is not only exalted and farre exalted above this or that God or King, but above them all; This is a ſupremacy with utmoſt univerſality.

Secondly,

Secondly, His power is univerſall, as to places, and nations; ſome places claime priviledge, and are exempt from the juriſdiction of Princes, if obnoxious perſons get thither, they are free from the courſe of the Law. There were *Cities of refuge* among the *Jewes*, and *Sanctuaries* in the dayes of old among us, where evill-doers could not be toucht. But the power of the Lord reacheth all places, even to the hornes of the Altar (*Pſal:* 83. 18.) *Thou whoſe name alone is Jehovah, art moſt high over all the earth*.

Thirdly, His power is univerſall, as in all places, ſo over all things; it extends to the ſtarrs of heaven, and to the fowles of the ayre, to the beaſts of the earth, and to the fiſhes of the Sea; to whatſoever moves in this world; they are all at the command of God, if he doth but ſpeake, they run and execute his will.

Fourthly, His power is univerſall, in reference to time; 'tis never out, nor ſhall ever end; he is *King immortall, and King eternall*, his Kingdome is an everlaſting Kingdome. The power of God is an univerſall power in all theſe conſiderations: His power of Governing is of the ſame extent, as his power of creating was; that which he created at once, he governes alwayes. He did not ſet up the fabrick of this world, and then leave it to it ſelfe, but he preſerveth and ordereth all things in it. The wel-being, the orderly being of the creature, is as much of God as the being of it.

Some ſay, God made the world at firſt, and ſet all the wheeles of it a-going, but now things goe on by chance, by fortune, or by accident, at leaſt particular events are not under his government, but come to paſſe as the wiſdome or folly of men is moſt active in the production of them.

I anſwer, to ſet up blind fortune, and chance, yea or the wit and policy of man, as governing the world, is to ſet up other Gods in the world; if chance and fortune, or the wit of man, governe any part of the world, then they had a part in making the world. If you divide one power, you divide the other. For thoſe inviſible things of God, his eternal power and God-head, are as much or as evidently ſeene, in the things which are done, as in the things which are made. 'Tis true indeed God uſeth many hands in governing, ordering, and diſpoſing the things of this world. The Princes of this world, are eminently his hand, but God doth

not

Non eget alienis adjutorijs ad regendum mundum qui non eguit ad faciendum. Greg: Lib: 24. Moral: ca. 26.

not uſe any power in governing this world, to diminiſh his owne, nor doth he withdraw his owne power, what power ſoever he uſeth; 'tis his power that acts effectually, and gives ſucceſſe in the acting of all power. It was ſayd to that King who prided himſelfe in what he had done in the world; *Shall the Axe boaſt it ſelfe againſt him that heweth therewith, or ſhall the ſaw magnifie it ſelfe againſt him that ſhaketh it?* (Iſa: 10. 15.) As if the Lord had ſayd to that proud Aſſyrian Prince, *Doſt thou looke upon thy ſelfe, as if thou didſt all, and governedſt all? thou art no more in the governing the world* (though the chiefe earthly Governour of all the world) *then an Axe is in the hand of him that uſeth it; And though the artificer cannot doe his worke without an Axe, though he cannot divide his Timber without a ſaw, yet I the Lord am able to doe my worke without thee.* At beſt and moſt, men are but inſtruments in the hand of God; and he ſerves his owne turne by men, not to ſignifie that he cannot worke without them, nor that his worke is done either with more eaſe to himſelfe, or more ſucceſſe as to it ſelfe by their helpe (he is not ſo weake as to need helpe, nor is at all ſtrengthned by the helpe he uſeth) but only to ſhew that as he hath the command of, ſo he hath a uſe for every creature (*Iſa:* 7. 18.) *The Lord ſhall hiſſe for the fly*; if God doe but hiſſe to the fly, or any creature on earth, yea to the devills in hell, they are at his call, and doe his will, though they intend it not. Further; though God can doe all himſelfe, yet he uſeth various inſtruments, that he may indear man to man, or that no man may ſay, he hath no need of another. Thus the Apoſtle argues (1 *Cor:* 12. 21.) *The eye cannot ſay unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor againe the head to the feete, I have no need of you.* Surely then the feete cannot ſay to the head, we have no need of thee, nor the hand to the eye, we have no need of thee. That, Creatures may ſhew their love to one another, and ſee their need of one another, God is pleaſed to give them a charge to worke and diſpoſe of the things in the world, though the charge and diſpoſure of the whole world be in himſelfe.

Now if the Lord be thus inveſted with all power originally and eſſentially, then I would mind thoſe who are in power of two things, and thoſe that are under power of one.

Firſt, *Let them that have power remember to uſe it for God.* They that have but family power ſhould uſe it for God; how much more

more they that have power over nations. (*Pſal:* 2. 10, 11.) *Be wiſe now therefore O ye Kings, be inſtructed ye Judges of the earth, ſerve the Lord with feare, and rejoyce with trembling.* When he ſaith, *ſerve the Lord with feare*, I ſuppoſe he doth not intend it in that notion of *ſerving the Lord*, as ſerving him denotes our holineſſe and obedience in generall; but when he ſaith, *ſerve the Lord with feare*, his meaning is, ſerve him ſo in the exerciſe of your power, and in your places, as you have power in your hand, as you have received a Charge or Commiſſion from God over this or that part of the earth, ſo ſerve him with feare, in the uſe of that power. As man ought in all the ſervice of God to be in a holy feare, ſo eſpecially when he ſerveth God in the adminiſtration of power, becauſe all power is from God. And therefore (which is the next thing I would hence mind thoſe of that are in power)

Secondly, Remember, The day of account muſt needs be a ſad day to thoſe who abuſe their power to the oppreſſion of man; and chiefely to thoſe who turne their power againſt God; that is, againſt the wayes and truths of God, againſt the ſervants and people of God, againſt the ends and deſignes of God. God will call ſuch as have had any charge over the earth to an account, and let them who either of theſe wayes abuſe their power, conſider whether ſuch accounts will paſſe as they muſt give. Surely when the day of the Lord ſhall be upon ſuch *Oakes and Cedars*, upon *ſuch mountaines and hils*, as the Prophet (*Iſa:* 2. 13, 14.) calleth the Powers and Princes of this world, they will even be forced (as he deſcribes them at the 19th verſe) *to goe into the holes of the rockes, and into the caves of the earth, for feare of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majeſty, when he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the earth.* It is bad to be abuſed by the power of man, but 'tis worſt for that man who abuſeth his power. *Thy terribleneſſe hath deceived thee* (ſaith the Prophet, *Jer:* 49. 16.) *and the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwelleſt in the clefts of the rocke, that holdeſt the height of the hill*; that is, thou that art in high power, and alſo holdeſt thy height, thou art deceived, and thy terribleneſſe hath deceived thee; becauſe thou haſt been able to terrifie many with thy power, therefore thou haſt preſumed that none ſhall ever terrifie or trouble thee; This vaine confidence hath deceived thee, for (as it followeth in the latter part of that verſe) *though thou ſhouldeſt make thy neſt as high as the Eagle, I will bring thee*

 downe

downe from thence, saith the Lord; that is, I will bring thee to a reckoning for terrifying those with thy power whom thou shouldest have protected by it.

Lastly, This is matter of great Comfort to all good men who are under power; though they are wronged and oppressed by the power of man, this may support them, God hath power over all the earth, he hath the Charge, and he will see them righted one time or other. (*Eccles:* 3. 16, 17.) *Moreover, I saw under the Sun the place of Judgement, that wickednesse was there, and the place of righteousnesse, that iniquity was there; I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked, for there is a time for every purpose and for every worke.* And if for every purpose and worke, then surely for this, the reviewing of the unrighteous judgements of the Princes and Powers of the earth, who hold the places of Judgement and righteousnesse; to punish the perverting of which, the Lord who is Prince of the Kings of the earth often *powreth contempt upon Princes* (Psal: 107. 40, 41.) *and causeth them to wander in the wildernesse where there is no way; yet setteth he the poore on high from affliction, and maketh him familyes like a flocke.* For as the Holy Ghost saith (*Psal:* 138. 6, 7.) *Though the Lord be high, yet hath he regard to the lowly, but the proud he knoweth a farr of*; hereupon his faith riseth up to a full assurance in the next verse; *Though I walke in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.*

Thus much for the argument here used, the Lord is righteous, for he hath all power in his hand; and he hath no reason upon any account in the world to pervert power; yea for him to doe any thing that is not righteous, were to act against himselfe, even against his owne being and blessednesse, who is God blessed for evermore.

JOB.

JOB. Chap. 34. Vers. 14, 15.

If he set his heart upon man: if he gather unto himselfe his spirit and his breath.

All flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn to his dust.

IN these two verses *Elihu* perfects the proofe of what he lately asserted, that *God is just, and that there is no unrighteousnesse in him* (v. 12.) *yea surely God will not doe wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert Judgement*; For, as *Moses* in his dying song describes him; *He is the rocke, his worke is perfect; for all his wayes are judgement; a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he.* The first argument for the confirmation of this was opened at the 13 verse. And it was grounded upon the absolutenes and universality of his dominion: Here we have a second argument from the sweet temperament of his power and goodnes. God hath power enough in his hand at once to destroy all flesh, and to command every man back into the dust. But he doth not thus put out his power. We live and live comfortably; we enjoy not only our lives, but many mercies of this life; and therefore surely God doth not deale rigorously, much lesse unrighteously with man. *He that doth all men good beyond their deserts, will not punish any man beyond his demerits.* He that doth not exercise his power alwayes where he might, will not exercise it all where he ought not. That's the summe and scope of *Elihu* in the context under hand.

Vers. 14. *If he set his heart upon man.*

To *set the heart* upon any thing or person, is a Scripture expression, often used, noting more then barely to think upon or mind both or either. It signifieth to have deep and serious thoughts, to think with consideration and attention, yea with some height and heat of affection. And all this whether that thing which the heart and affections are set upon, please or displease, be comfortable or grievous; for both love and hatred, hope and feare, are thoughtfull of, and sollicitous about their severall objects. Hence

that caution (*Psal:* 62. 10.) *If riches encrease set not your heart upon them*; we naturally love riches, and therefore as naturally spend many thoughts, both how to get and how to keepe them. If a man have riches, or an encrease of riches, it is not unlawfull for him to thinke of them, (yet we should be as sparing of our thoughts that way as can be, our thoughts and the bent of our soules should alwayes be upon God) but that which the Psalmist forbids is the setling of our hearts; As if he had sayd, *Let not your thoughts stay or dwell there.* Riches are themselves transient things, therefore they should have but our transient thoughts. *Set not your hearts upon them,* for they may quickly be unsetled. *Samuel* bespake *Saul* in the same language about a worldly concernment, when he went out to seek his fathers Asses (1 *Sam:* 9. 20.) *Set not thy mind on them.* 'Tis like *Saul* was over-burdened with this thought, What's become of, or what shall I doe for my fathers Asses? Be not sollicitous about them, saith *Samuel*, greater things are towards thee. *Abigail* useth the same forme of speaking to *David* concerning *Nabal* (1 Sam: 25. 23.) *Let not my Lord regard this man of Belial*, lay not to heart what *Nabal* hath sayd or done. Thus *Jonadab* took off *Davids* feare, that in one day he had been deprived of all his Sons (2 *Sam:* 13. 33.) *Now therefore let not my Lord the King take the thing to heart, to think that all the Kings sons are dead, for Amnon only is dead.* We are as apt to set our heart upon our losses, as upon our enjoyments. And to shew how little *Pharoah* regarded the heavy hand of God upon him, it is sayd (after *Moses* had turned all the waters that were in the river to blood, *Exod:* 7. 23.) *And Pharoah turned and went into his house, neither did set his heart to this also*; That is, he slighted what God had done. Let God speak, and strike once and againe, yea a third time, yet hard-hearted men doe not lay it to heart, nor set their heart upon it. Thus here in the Affirmative it is sayd of God, *If he set his heart upon man*; that is, if he doe but intend and mind this matter, he can quickly bring it about, even the perishing of all flesh.

Apponere cor est velle, decernere, constituere. q. d. *Si ei suum animum suggererit.* Vatabl.

If he set his heart upon man.

The text is rendered also, *If he set his heart against man:* The Hebrew particle signifieth not only upon, but against (*Amos* 7. 16.) *Prophesie not against Israel*, &c. And the generall sence of that reading may be given two wayes. First,

Valet contra. Si poneret contra eum cor suum. i.e. *si sibi*

First, *If he set his heart against man*, to enquire strictly into his life and wayes, if he should critically mark all his errours, or faults, and to resolve to proceed against him, he might soon make an end of him, as it followeth in the next verse. As the strongest, so the best and holyest of men are not able to stand before him. Thus the words are an answer given by *Elihu* to that frequent request of *Job*, that God would let him come near to judgement, and hear his cause argued and debated before him, even at his Bar; but saith *Elihu* (according to this sence) If God set his heart against man, if he doth but strictly enquire into his condition, course, and conversation, it would be sad with him; *All men must perish.* Those two places in the Psalmes answer this interpretation fully, (*Psal.* 130. 3.) *If thou Lord shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who should stand?* That is, No man shall; We cannot stand in our righteousnes before God, how then shall we stand in our iniquities! And therefore the second Text deprecates the Lord's severe enquiry into our purest and most perfect services, (*Psal.* 143. 2.) *Enter not into judgement with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.*

proponeret hostiliter eum aggredi. Pisc:

Secondly, *If he set his heart against man*, that is, If he have a general purpose to destroy and ruine him by his absolute Soveraignty, he can easily do it; what God hath a minde to do, or only willeth it to be done, he hath power enough to do it: He can make any man miserable, and not only strip him of the comforts of this life, but of his life too: And as he hath power enough, if he would use it, so he hath soveraign unquestionable authority enough to bear him out in the use of his power. Now, seeing God who is cloathed with this absolute power, yet doth not exercise such a power, but having given man a being, continues to very many men a comfortable being in this world, and doth not willingly grieve or afflict any of the children of men, nor execute any vengeance upon them without their desert; surely then God is righteous, he will not do wickedly. Thus we have the importance of the Translation, *If he set his heart against man*: We say, (which also beareth fairly enough the same sence) *If he set his heart upon man.*

If he gathereth unto himself his Spirit and his breath.

Si direxerit ad eum cor suum spiritum illius & flatum ad se trahat, Vulg.

Some render it thus; *If he set his heart upon* (or *against*) *man,*

he will gather unto him his ſpirit and his breath: and then, as it followeth, *All fleſh ſhall periſh together.*

We repeat the ſuppoſition according to the Hebrew Text; *If he ſet his heart upon man*; *If he gather to himſelf his ſpirit and his breath, then* &c. Take either reading, the general ſenſe is the ſame, and in brief 'tis this: *If God have a minde to it, he can quickly thruſt all men out of the world.* He that gave man his ſpirit and his breath, can at pleaſure recal both, and then all fleſh periſheth and turneth again unto (what it once was) duſt. The Hebrew word which we render to *gather*, ſignifieth to add one thing or perſon to another: When *Rachel had conceived and bare a ſon*, (Gen. 30. 22, 23.) *ſhe called* (from this word) *his name Joſeph, and ſaid, the Lord ſhall add to me another ſon.* Thus here, If God *add*, or *gather* to himſelf *his ſpirit and his breath*, that is, the ſpirit and breath of man, &c. We may diſtinguiſh between theſe two, ſpirit and breath (Some inſiſt much and curiouſly upon this diſtinction) The ſpirit denoting the ſoul or the internal rational power of man, and the breath that effect of life which followeth or floweth from the union of ſoul and body. The life of man is often expreſſed by *breath*; *Ceaſe ye from man, whoſe breath* (or life) *is in his noſtrils*; (Iſa. 2. 22.) If once man's breath goeth out, his life cannot ſtay behinde; the ſpirit of a man is in this ſence diſtinct from his breath; for when the breath is vaniſhed, and is no more, the ſoul or ſpirit liveth. The Apoſtle in his prayer for the Theſſalonians (1 *Theſſ.* 5.23.) puts *ſoul and ſpirit* together: *The very God of peace ſanctifie you wholly, and I pray God, your whole ſpirit, and ſoul, and body, be preſerved harmleſs unto the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* There ('tis moſt probable) by the ſoul, he intends the inferiour powers in man, or his affections, and by the ſpirit, his higher powers of reaſon and underſtanding: yet the ſpirit is often put for that whole part of man which is contradiſtinct to his body. *Into thy hands I commend my ſpirit*: that is, my ſoul, not forgetting my body: And I conceive, we may ſafely expound it here in that latitude, as comprehending the whole inner man. Yet it is all one, as to the ſence of this place, whether we take ſpirit and breath diſtinctly or for the ſame; the ſpirit being ſo called from ſpiration or breathing; *If he gather unto him his ſpirit, and his breath.* The gathering of the ſpirit and breath of man unto God, is but a periphraſis or circumlocution of death,

אסף

Spiritum animam, & flatus vitam quæ ab anima provenit & conſervatur ſignificat; ego opinor idem eſſe hoc loco. Sanct.

death, or of man's departure out of this life; when man was formed or created (*Gen.* 2.7.) it is ſaid, *God breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living ſoul*: And when man dyeth, his breath or ſpirit may be ſaid to be gathered or returned back unto God; ſo then, the meaning of *Elihu* in this double ſuppoſition, (*If he ſet his heart upon man, if he he gather to himſelf his ſpirit and his breath,*) is clearly this, if God were once reſolved, or ſhould but ſay the word, that man muſt preſently die, die he muſt, and that preſently.

Hence Note,

Firſt, *God can eaſily do whatſoever he hath a minde to do.*

If he do put his heart upon the doing of any thing, it is done; Men often ſet their hearts, yea and their hands unto that which they cannot do; if men could do that which they ſet their hearts to do, or have a minde to do, and thereupon ſet their hands to do, we ſhould have ſtrange work in the world. 'Tis a mercy to many men, that man is often fruſtrated in his thoughts and purpoſes, in his attempts and undertakings; and 'tis a glorious mercy to all that have an intereſt in God, that God never loſt a thought, nor can be hindred in any work he ſetteth his heart upon. He that can let or ſtop all men in their works, can work, and none ſhall lett or ſtop him. What God will do, is not defecible or undoeable (if I may ſo expreſs it) by any power in heaven or earth. And as God can do what he will, and ask no man leave, ſo he can do what he will without trouble to himſelf; 'tis but the reſolve of his will, the turning of his hand, or the caſt of his eye (all which are ſoon diſpatcht) and 'tis done. Thus God breathed out his wiſhes for the welfare of Iſrael, (*Pſal.* 81. 13.) *O that my people had hearkned unto me*, &c. *I ſhould ſoon have ſubdued their enemies, and turned my hand againſt their adverſaries.* As if he had ſaid, *I could and would have eaſed them of all their enemies, even of all that roſe up againſt them eaſily, even with the turning of my hand*: What is more eaſily done, or more ſpeedily done, then the *turning of a hand*? Many things are hard to man, (and indeed very few things are eaſie to him, except it be to ſin, or to do evil, he can do evil eaſily) ſome things are not only hard, but too hard, impoſſible for man; but there is nothing hard, much leſs too hard for God, he can eaſily do the hardeſt things; yea, the hardeſt things are

are as eaſie to him as the eaſieſt; for as (*Pſal.* 139. 12.) *Darkneſs hideth not from the ſight of God, the darkneſs and the light are both alike to him*; ſo harduneſs hinders not the work of God, hardneſs and eaſineſs are both alike to him, if he ſet his heart upon it. From this general truth, take two inferences.

Firſt, How ſhould we fear before this God? How ſhould we tremble at the remembrance of, and walk humbly (in our higheſt aſſurance) with this God? We are much afraid to diſpleaſe thoſe men who can eaſily hurt us, and in whoſe hand it is to ruine us every hour: But O how little are we in this thought to fear the Lord, to take heed of diſpleaſing the Lord, who can with eaſe either help or hurt, either bring ſalvation or deſtruction, who in a moment can thruſt the ſoul out of the body, and caſt both into hell.

Secondly, We may hence make a ſtrong inference for the comfort of the people of God, when their ſtraits are moſt pinching, and their difficulties look like impoſſibilities, and are ſo indeed, while they look to man; when their enemies are ſtrongeſt, and the mountains which ſtand in the way of their expected comforts greateſt, if then God will be entreated to ſet his heart, and caſt his eye upon them, their ſtraits are preſently turned into enlargements, difficulties become eaſie, and mountains plains. If we can but engage the Lord, (his own promiſe is the ſureſt engagement, and indeed all that we can put upon him, or minde him of, if (I ſay) we can thus engage the Lord) to be with us, who can be (to our hurt, many will be to their own) againſt us.

Secondly Note.

Our life is at the beck, diſpoſe and pleaſure of God.

He can gather the ſpirit and the breath to himſelf whenſoever he pleaſeth; (*Pſal.* 104. 29.) *Thou hideſt thy face and they are troubled, and thou takeſt away their breath, they die, and return to their duſt.* If God hideth his face from us, 'tis death while we live; but if he take away our breath, we cannot live, but die. (*Pſal.* 90. 3.) *Thou turneſt man to deſtruction, and ſayeſt, Return ye children of men.* Here's man turning and returning upon the ſaying of God; man turneth to death, he returneth to duſt, and ſhall at laſt return from the duſt, and all this when God ſaith he muſt. Our life is a very frail thing, and it is in the hand of God to

to continue or take it away; to let us hold it, or gather it home to himſelf.

Thirdly, From the manner of ſpeaking, *If he gather to himſelf his ſpirit and his breath*;

Note.

When man dieth, he is gathered to God.

When (as *Solomon* allegorizeth the death of man, *Eccl.* 12.6,7.) *The ſilver cord is looſed, and the golden bowl broken*, &c. *Then ſhall the duſt* (that is, the body) *return to the earth as it was, and the ſpirit ſhall return to God who gave it*; that is, each part of man (when he departeth this world) ſhall go its proper way, and return to that which is moſt congenial to it; his body to the earth, from whence it is; his ſoul to God, of whom it is. God is a Spirit, the creating Spirit, and our created *ſpirits are gathered to God when they are ſeparated from the body*; yet remember there is a two-fold gathering or returning of the ſpirit to God.

Firſt, To abide and be bleſſed with him for ever; thus the ſpirits of believers or ſaints only are gathered to God when they depart out of this world.

Secondly, There is a gathering of the ſpirit to God, to be judged and diſpoſed of by him, to receive a ſentence of life or death from him. And thus the ſpirit of every man or woman that dieth, is gathered to God, be they good or bad, believers or unbelievers, (*Heb.* 9. 27.) *It is appointed for men once to die, but after this the judgement.* 'Tis the Statute Law of God, man muſt die, and the ſound of Judgement is at the heels of death. That Text ſaith, *but after this the Judgement.* The general day of judgement ſhall not be till the reſurrection of man from the dead; But there is a perſonal judgement, or a determining of every mans ſtate when he dieth; and for that end every mans ſpirit is gathered to God to receive his ſentence. The ſpirits of wicked men are gathered to him and condemned, the ſpirits of the righteous are gathered to him and acquitted: We are come, ſaith the Apoſtle (*Heb.* 12. 23.) *to God, the Judge of all, and to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect.* *David* knew he muſt be gathered to God, but he earneſtly deprecated ſuch a gathering as moſt ſhall have, (*Pſal.* 26. 9.) *Gather not my ſoul with ſinners, nor my life with bloody men.* It is this word, when ſinners die, they are gathered

thered; but *David* would not be gathered as they are gathered; They are gathered to God, but it is that they may be for ever separated from him; they are gathered to a day of vengeance and wrath: Therefore *David* prayed, *Gather not my soul with sinners.* Death is called a gathering in a threefold reference.

First, *A gathering to our people.* Thus it is said of *Aaron*, (Num. 20. 24.) *Aaron shall be gathered unto his people, for he shall not enter into the land*, &c. Death separates the people of God from their people, that is, from those that are like them on earth, but it will be a means of bringing them into the society of their people, or fellow believers who are gone before them into heaven.

Secondly, Death is called *a gathering to our Fathers*, (2 *Chron.* 34. 28.) *Behold I will gather thee to thy Fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace.* There's a gathering to a more special company, and that with other like Scriptures are an argument that we shall know our relations in heaven. For, *to be gathered to our Fathers*, spoken of in the first part of the verse, is more then to be gathered to the grave, spoken of in the latter; and by our fathers, we are to understand more of our fathers then the grave hath in its keeping (which is but their bodies) even their souls, which are kept in heaven.

Thirdly, According to the phrase of this Text, death is called a gathering to God; *If he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath.*

Whence Note, Fourthly.

The spirit or soul of man hath its original from God.

It is of him to whom it returneth; The soul or spirit of man is of God in a more special way then his body is; for though God giveth both, yet the Scripture (in the place before named) speaks of the soul as the gift of God, but passeth by the body; (*Eccles.* 12. 7.) *The dust shall return to the earth, as it was; and the spirit shall return to God who gave it.* 'Tis God, nor man alone, who hath given us these bodies, but 'tis not man, but God alone who hath given us these spirits; therefore men are called *the fathers of our flesh*, that is, of the body, in way of distinction, from God, *who is the father of spirits* (Heb. 12. 9.) *We have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence, shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live*; that is, shall we not rather be subject to God then to man? Father of spirits is an Attribute or Title too high and honourable for any but God. One of the Ancients in his gracious breathing after God, brake out into this holy Passion; *My soul (O God) came from thee, and my heart is unquiet or restless until it return to thee again*; God is our center, and our rest: He gathereth to himself mans spirit; and when he doth so, what then? what's the issue of it? *Elihu* tells us what in the next verse,

Vers. 15. *All flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again to his dust.*

As if he had said, As soon as ever the spirit is gathered, the flesh is consumed, or, as we render, perisheth.

All flesh, may be taken in the largest sence, not only for all men that live, but for all living creatures: Thus largely *Moses* extendeth it, (*Gen.* 6. 17.) *Behold, saith the Lord, I will bring a flood of water to destroy all flesh*; that is, all the Beasts of the earth, and Fowls of the ayre, together with Mankinde, except a few of each in the Ark: so (*Psal.* 136. 25.) *Who giveth food to all flesh*, (that is, to man and beast) *for his mercy endureth for ever.* Yet some understand this first part more narrowly, for all flesh except man; because he addeth in the latter part of the verse, *and man shall return again to his dust*: But I conceive we are to take *all flesh* here for all men, and only for men, it being usual in Scripture to put the same thing twice, under different expressions. So then

All flesh, that is, every man, be he who he will, *shall perish.* Thus as *all flesh* is restrained to man, so it extendeth over all men, yea over all things of man (*Isa.* 40. 6.) *All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field*; that is, all men are perishing, and all that man hath, meerly as a man, is as fading and perishing as himself is.

Some take notice, that man was not called flesh till after his fall; It's said before, when God set him up in that primitive purity of his Creation, *Man became a living soul.* He was not spoken of at first as *flesh*, but as a *living soul*, (*Gen.* 2. 7.) but as soon as man had sinned, he was called *flesh*, as if he had no soul. There may two other reasons be given why man is called flesh, both following from the former. First, Because man since his fall doth

moſt for his fleſh, and neglects his ſoul altogether, till being planted into the ſecond *Adam*, he is brought out of that wretched condition into which he fell by and with the firſt *Adam*. Secondly, He is called fleſh, becauſe, ſince the fall man is become weak and frail, both as to Naturals and Morals, (*Gen.* 6. 3.) *My ſpirit ſhall not alwaies ſtrive with man, for that he alſo is fleſh*: As if the Lord had ſaid, *Now man declareth himſelf to be fleſh indeed, he acts like an impotent ſorry creature, he acts as if he ſcarce had a ſoul in him, as if he were no more then the beaſts of the earth: My ſpirit ſhall not alwaies ſtrive with man, for that he alſo is fleſh*; and therefore (*v.* 30.) God told *Noah*, *The end of all fleſh is come before me*; that is, Man, and all his worldly glory, ſhall all be ſwept away with a deluge of water, as here,

All fleſh ſhall periſh together.

There is a two-fold periſhing; Firſt, By way of annihilation. Secondly, By way of tranſmutation. When *Elihu* ſaith, all fleſh ſhall periſh, we are not to underſtand it of annihilating all fleſh; (God can do that, he can turn man back into that nothing out of which he was made) but the periſhing in the Text importeth only a change. Death is called a change, & a change to periſhing, as that good & great woman ſaid, *I will go in unto the King, and if I periſh, I periſh*, (Heſt. 4. 16.) that is, *If I die, I die*. The Prophet laments (*Iſa.* 57. 1.) *The righteous periſheth, and no man layeth it to heart. All fleſh ſhall periſh*

יחד *Together.*

That is, without exception, one as well as another, rich and poor, high and low, ſtrong and weak, all are alike in the hand of God, (*Pſal.* 33. 13. 15.) *The Lord looketh from heaven, he beholdeth all the ſons of men*, &c. *he faſhioneth their hearts alike*, or *together*; that is, he faſhioneth the hearts of all men: God doth not ſo faſhion mens hearts alike, as to make them all alike, (faces do not differ ſo much as hearts) but as he faſhions one mans heart, ſo anothers; he faſhions the heart of a King, as well as the heart of a begger: *All fleſh ſhall periſh together*; *none either by power or policy can ſtand againſt a diſpleaſed God.*

Again, We may take the word *together*, for *all at once*, God can make a total devaſtation in the earth, and ſweep all away as filth

filth with the beſome of deſtruction; He can deſtroy all the world, or all men, who are the chiefe part of the world, together, or at one blow; ſo that (as the Prophet *Nahum* ſpeaks, *Chap.* 1. 9.) *Affliction ſhall not riſe up a ſecond time. All fleſh ſhall periſh together,*

And man ſhall returne againe unto duſt.

Or he ſhall goe backe unto duſt, that is, he ſhall dye: that's the ſentence which God gave upon man when he had ſinned (*Gen.* 3. 19.) *In the ſweat of thy face ſhalt thou eat bread, till thou returne unto the ground; for out of it waſt thou taken, for duſt thou art, and unto duſt ſhalt thou returne.* Man was duſt before he ſinned; yet he had not returned to duſt, if he had not turned from God by ſin. Sin brought in death, and death brings us to the duſt. *All fleſh ſhall periſh together, and man ſhall returne againe unto duſt.*

Hence obſerve.

There is no one man hath more priviledge then another, againſt the ſentence of death.

The Greateſt Prince dyeth as ſoone as the meaneſt peaſant. Death can as ſoone and as eaſily breake into the ſtrongeſt ſort or tower of ſtone, as into the meaneſt cottage of reeds. *High and low ſhall periſh together. Let none hope to ſecure themſelves by any thing of this world from going out of this world. Riches availe not in the day of death* (Pro: 11. 4.) High Titles and honours availe not, ſtrength availeth not, beauty availeth not, none of theſe can be a protection, if God ſend out a writ or ſummons to the grave. Happy are they who get an aſſurance of life after death, for none have an aſſurance of life againſt death.

Againe, In that death is here expreſſed under this notion of *periſhing*.

Obſerve.

Man is but in a periſhing condition while he is in this world.

As all the things of the world are, ſo is man, while he abideth (if I may ſay he abideth) in this world. Chriſt earneſtly exhorts (*John* 6. 27.) *Labour not for the meat that periſheth.* Why ſhould we labour, that is, ſet our ſelves with our whole ſtrength and might to purſue periſhing things, ſeeing we our ſelves are periſhing?

ing? The more periſhing we are, the more reaſon we have to looke after and labour for thoſe things which doe not, which cannot periſh. When the Apoſtle ſaith (1 *Pet:* 1. 18.) *We are not redeemed with corruptible things from our vaine converſation*, &c. He doth not inſtance in flowers or fruits of the earth, which quickly rot, but in gold and ſilver, which are the moſt durable and laſting metalls; even theſe are corruptible; but we our ſelves as to this bodyly life, are corruptible, not only as gold and ſilver, but as the moſt fading flowers and ſummer fruits of the earth.

Further, From that other deſcription of death, as 'tis called *a returning againe unto duſt.*

We learne.—
Man is of the duſt.

Unleſſe man, as to his body, were of the duſt when he began to live, he could not be ſayd to returne unto duſt when he dyeth, or departs this life. Many men pore upon their pedegree, and heir minds ſwel with pride, becauſe they are of ſuch or ſuch a noble deſcent; but let them remember, *man is of the duſt*. The ſoule or ſpirit of man is indeed from above, as was ſhewed before; and the body of man is (I grant) a compound of all the foure Elements. Our bodyly ſpirits (ſay Naturaliſts) are of the fire, our breath of the ayre, our blood of the water, and our fleſh and bones are moſt properly of the duſt of the earth; yet the whole body of man is denominated duſt or earth, or as the Apoſtle ſtileth it (2 *Cor:* 5. 1.) 'Tis an *earthly houſe*; *If our earthly houſe of this tabernacle were diſſolved.* For though we may truely ſay, there is water, and ayre, and fire in this houſe, yet becauſe earth is the predominant Element, the whole body beares the denomination of that. God is not ſayd to forme man of the water, or ayre, or fire, but of the duſt of the ground (*Gen:* 2.7.) though all thoſe as well as earth were ingredients in the compoſition and formation of mans body. As man with reſpect to his ſpirituals and moralls, is denominated from that which is chief in him, ſo with reſpect to his naturalls. Every man hath the ſeeds and principles of all ſin in him, yet many men are knowne and expreſſed by ſome ſpeciall ſin. Thus one is called *a covetous man*, another *a malicious man*, &c. becauſe covetouſneſſe and malice are their predominant ſins in practice, though the principles of all other ſins are in them.

So

So for grace, one is ſayd to be *a patient man*, and another *an humble man*, and a third, *a ſelf-denying man*. Though where any grace is all graces are, yet a godly man is knowne by that grace which acts moſt eminently and vigorouſly in him. In this notion man is ſayd to be of the duſt, and to returne to duſt, as if he were nothing but duſt, becauſe duſt is the predominant Element in the naturall conſtitution of man.

And if ſo, then this is an humbling conſideration. Some walke as if they thought the ground or earth not good enough for them to goe upon. *Moſes* ſetting forth the dreadfullneſs of famine, as a punithment threatned the Jewiſh nation in caſe of difobedience, tells us it ſhall fall on all ſorts, both of men and women (*Deut:* 28. 56.) *The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to ſet the ſole of her foot upon the ground for delicateneſs and tenderneſs*, &c. Some are loth to put their feet to the ground, whereas the beſt foote that ever trod upon the ground, is duſt as wel as the ground trodden on, and 'tis *but duſt to duſt* when they are in the duſt, and dirt to dirt if they fall into the dirt. The Apoſtle, among other reaſons, for this alſo, calleth the body of man *a vile body* (Phil: 3.21.) *Who ſhall change our vile body that it may be faſhioned like unto his glorious body*. Our bodies are vile, chiefly from the contagion of ſin, that hath made them moſt vile; But they are comparatively vile, with reſpect to the very matter out of which they were all repreſentatively made when the firſt man was made, without the leaſt taint or touch of ſin. Man at beſt as to the body is but a little breathing duſt or moving clay. And did we ſpiritually look upon the matter of our bodyes, it would exceedingly humble our ſpirits, and keep them low even when like *Jordan* they are ready to over-flow all the banks of modeſty, and moderation. We heare of a bird, who priding himſelfe in ſpreading and peruſing his fine feathers, is preſently as it were, aſhamed by looking down upon his owne black feete. Surely did man often conſider that his whole body is of the earth, it would be an excellent meanes to keepe his heart in a lowly frame, how highly ſoever himſelfe is exalted in the earth.

And as man, while he lives is from the duſt; ſo when he dyeth (that's another humbling conſideration) his body not only returneth unto duſt, but turneth into duſt. *David*, as the figure of Chriſt cryed out (*Pſal:* 22. 15.) *Thou haſt brought me into the*

duſt

dust of death. Dust and death are neere acquaintance, and all that dy, grow quickly into neerer acquaintance with the dust. It is sayd (*Psal:* 103. 14.) *The Lord knoweth our frame, he remembreth that we are but dust.* But what advantage is that to us, that the Lord knoweth the one, and remembreth the other? I may answer as the Apostle doth to another question (*Rom:* 3. 2.) *much every way*, chiefly, because he will pitty us and spare us and deale tenderly with us, as considering how frayle we are. Now as it may be our comfort that God remembreth we are but dust, so 'tis our duty to remember that we are but dust, and that we must to the dust. Shall God remember that we are dust, and shall not we remember it our selves? Did we more remember that we are dust, we should more prepare for our return to the dust. Yea, I may say, we should be more in heaven, if we were more in our dust; that is, the gracious and serious meditation of our naturall vilenes and infirmities would provoke us to looke heaven-wards, and prepare for heaven, where these our *naturall* bodyes shall become *spirituall* (1 Cor: 15. 44.) that is, they shall be like spirits (though not turned into spirits) living without food or sleep, living free from wearines and sickness, from paines and languishments, yea free from the remotest feare of ever dying or returning againe into dust. Such as these and many more would be our soules advantages, did we often (as becomes us) remember that our bodyes are of the earth, and must shortly be earth againe. Thus to be earthly minded, is the way to be heavenly minded. Many are earthly minded, that is, they mind earthly things, but few mind that themselves are earth. In what holy heights and elevations of spirit should we be, if we could spiritually remember how low we once were, and how low, as to our bodyes, we within a few dayes shall be.

Lastly, This truth should take us off from all creature-confidence from trusting in man. *Cursed is the man* (saith the Lord, *Jer:* 17. 5.) *that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arme.* 'Tis a cursed thing for man to trust in man, because trust is an honour proper to God; he alone is to be trusted: And as it is a cursed, so it is also a foolish thing to trust in man. *David* a Great Prince giveth us this counsel from God (*Psal:* 146. 3, 4.) *Put not your trust in Princes, nor in the son of man in whom there is no help; his breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth* (or to his dust) *in that day all*

all his thoughts perish, happy is the man that hath the God of Jacob for his help. What can dust do for dust? what can dust get by dust? that which is weake may become strong, by trusting to, or leaning upon that which is strong; the weakest man is strong enough, while he trusteth upon the strong God; but if weake trust upon weake, how shall it be made strong. Therefore let all flesh hearken to the words of the holy Prophet (*Isa:* 2. 21.) *Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrills; for wherein is he to be accounted of?* Man himselfe is a *soone-ceasing creature* (*David* useth the noune of this verbe to expresse himselfe so, *Psal:* 39. 4.) and therefore we have reason to *cease from man*, to cease from any high estimation of the highest men, much more from any confidence in them. What can we assure our selves of from any man living, seeing he hath no assurance of his owne life? The Prophet would have us understand that, while he saith, *his breath is in his nostrills*; Mans life is gone as soone as his breath is gone, and how soone may that be gone! *David* describeth a proud man, *puffing at his enemies* (Psal: 10. 5.) He is puffed up and swelled with high conceits of himselfe, as if he had some great matter in him, and he puffs at others as if he could do some great matter against them, forgetting that himselfe is but (as to his being in this world) a puffe of wind, which passeth away. As then, we need not feare what hurt man can doe us, so we should not hope nor have any expectation from him that he by his owne power (how great soever his power is) can doe us any good. *Wherein* (as to either of these purposes) *is man to be accounted of?* Man is an excellent creature, a creature of high account, as bearing the image of God, his soul is of more worth then the gaine of the whole world (*Math:* 16. 26.) and thus he is more to be accounted of, then all that in the world is most accounted of; But consider him as to the frayletty of his life, and the possibility, yea probability of his suddaine passage out of this world, and then, *wherein is he to be accounted of?* If we oppose man to God, or compare man with God, or trust man in stead of God, he is as vaine and worthlesse as any thing, a thing of nothing, or lesse then nothing.

JOB. Chap. 34. Vers. 16, 17.

If now thou hast understanding, heare this; hearken to the voice of my words.
Shall even he that hateth right, govern? and wilt thou condemne him that is most just?

ELihu having thus farre applied himselfe to *Jobs* friends, upon an Assurance that they were men of understanding; for so he bespake them at the 10th verse; *Hearken unto me ye men of understanding.* He now turneth his speech particularly to *Job*, and he doth it upon a hopefull supposition, that he also was a man of understanding.

Vers. 16. *If now thou hast understanding, heare this.*

The word which we render *understanding*, is not a *noune*, but the infinitive of a verbe in the Hebrew: and it may be rendred thus; *If thou hast to understand*; that is, if thou hast an ability to understand, which in sense is the same with our translation, *If thou hast understanding.* This forme of speaking by the infinitive for the noune, is frequent both in Scripture and other Authors. Thus 'tis sayd, *Your to know is nothing*; that is, *your knowledge is nothing, unlesse another know it, or be made knowing by it. Let us see* (saith the Oratour) *what thy to live blessedly is*; that is, what thou counsest blessednes. And another, *I have lost to be ashamed*; that is, shamefastnes or modesty. Thus *Elihu*, *If thou hast to understand, heare this.*

But it may be questioned, did *Elihu* indeed suspect whether *Job* did understand, or were an understanding man? Every man hath an understanding, as he is a man. To understand is the property, the inseparable property of a reasonable creature. Why then doth *Elihu* put a doubt upon *Job* in this, and say, *If now thou hast understanding*, &c.

I answer; *Elihu* indeed deales with *Job* as if he were somewhat below man in this businesse, at least, as if he were dull, and slow to receive, and apprehend what had been spoken to him, and therefore by this Apostraphe, he excites and stirres him up to set his understanding a-work to the utmost; As if he had sayd, *Although thou hast a habit of understanding, yet thou hast not acted it like an understanding man; nor given such proofe of it in this matter as is expected.*

Further, These words, *If now thou hast understanding*, referre not to the faculty, but to the speciall attributes of his understanding; chiefely to these three.

First, To the soundnes of it; *If thou hast any thing of a sound understanding.* The understandings of many are sicke, and diseased, their understandings are tainted and infected with errours and misperswasions. Now *if thou hast any thing of a sound understanding left in thee*, if there remaine yet any strength in thy understanding, to apprehend the force of those arguments and reasons which I shall propose to convince thee by, *heare this.* Erroneous understandings are altogether unfit to entertaine truth. As there must be a sutablenes between the stomack and the meat, else it is not digested, so between the minde and the object, else it cannot be received.

Secondly, To the uprightnes or impartiality of it; *If thou hast understanding*; that is, *if thou hast an unbiassed understanding*; Sometimes the affections turne aside, and bribe the understanding; self-intereſt puts a blinde upon the understanding. When a man hath a minde to that which is not right, he will have a minde to understand any thing that opposeth it.

Thirdly, To the spirituallnes of it, *If thou hast understanding*; that is, a renewed, a spirituall, an holy understanding, or the understanding of the holy, *heare this.* A man may have a great naturall understanding, a deep judgement, and yet be a very childe, or a man of no understanding in the things of God. Only a spirituall understanding is suited to spirituall things, (as the object is, such must the faculty be) that faculty which deales a-right about spirituall things, must be a spirituall faculty. The Apostle speakes concludingly (1 *Cor:* 2. 14.) *The natural man* (that is, the man unconverted or unregenerate) *perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishnes unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* And therefore the same Apostle professeth to the *Colossians* (*Chap:* 1. 9.) *We doe not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled, with the*

בינה cum accentu in penultima non potest esse nomen verbale, sed infinitivus loco nominis. Si est intelligere. i.e. intelligentia. Drus:

Scire tuum nihil est, &c. Juven:

Videamus beate vivere vestrum quale sit. Cic:

Hoc vereri pudidi. i.e. pudorem. Plaut:

Non caret aculeo Apostrophe quibus Jobi attentionem excitat. Si vel mica est in te bonæ mentis. Merc:

Infinitivus intelligere, non plenam intelligentiam indicat, sed vel tenuissimum intellectum, qui infinitivus actionem præsentem non habitu significat. Stupidum ergo et vecordem Jobum appellat, &c. Bold:

Si quid sanæ mentis habes. Bez:

the knowledge of his will, in all wisdome, and spirituall understanding. The will of God being spirituall, cannot be truely knowne but by a spirituall understanding. According to this three-fold attribute of the understanding we may expound *Elihu* speaking to *Job*, If thou hast a spirituall understanding, an unbiassed understanding, a sound understanding, *heare this.* As if he had sayd, *I have spoken, and am about to speake such things as may call out the strength, the best, the utmost line of a sound, impartiall and spirituall understanding, to sound the bottome and the depth of them.* Thus he provokes him to attend, not only with his eare, but with his understanding, with the best of his understanding, with the best understanding to the things he was to speake. And in this sence the most of men, all bad men have no understanding (*Psal:* 14. 2.) and *Job*, though a good man, had much deficiency in his. *If now thou hast understanding, heare this.*

Hence note.

He that hath not a right, a sound, a spirituall understanding, can scarce be said to have any understanding at all.

There are many understanding men, who have not this understanding, or an understanding for this. While *David* saith (*Psal:* 49. 20.) *Man that is in honour and understandeth not*, he supposeth, that a man ascended to the highest pitch of honour, may yet be without understanding, that is, without a right, a sound, a spirituall understanding; and then (as it followeth there) *he is like the beasts that perish.* Beasts have no understanding at all, the rationall or intellectuall power is proper to man. A man in honour, not having this honour, a right understanding, may be numbred among the beasts. *If thou hast understanding,*

Hear this.

As if he had said, I am not calling thee to hear an idle story, or a trivial matter; *Hear this*, there is an emphasis in the words both as to the Act and Object.

It is questioned what *Elihu* particularly intendeth by *this*; some refer it to what he had spoken before in *Job's* audience, though directed to his friends: *Hear* what I have spoken to thy friends in the former part of the chapter, in vindication of the righteousnesse of God. Secondly, Others refer it to what *Elihu* was now about to say; I have not yet done, I have not yet brought out all my reasons & arguments, I have not emptied my treasures, I have yet more to say, *Hear this*: A third sort refer these hortatory words, *hear this*, in the former part of the verse, to what he had already spoken, and those in the latter part of the verse, *hearken to the voice of my words*, to what he had yet to speak; but it is not much to the matter to which we refer them, it being clear, that what he had said, and what he had to say, was matter of weight; and so *hear this*, is emphatical, *this great, this deep, this useful and necessary point of Doctrine*, which I already have declared, or am now about to declare unto thee.

Hence Note.

That which we hear, we should labour to understand.

(Col. 3. 16.) *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom*; It is not enough to hear the word with our ears, or to have it in our mouths, it must dwell in our memories, and it must dwell there, not in a beggerly poor fashion, but richly; which it never doth, till we have a sound and clear understanding of it, and are both in heart and life conformed to it, yea transformed into it; that is it which the Apostle meaneth by the dwelling of the word in us richly in all wisdome. And he further assureth them (*chap.* 2. 1, 2.) that he had a *great conflict for them*; that is (as we put in the Margin) he had a great *fear or care of them, that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mysterie of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdome and knowledge.* He had held forth those great mysteries, the mysterie of God considered essentially, the mysterie of the Father considered personally, the mysterie of Christ considered mediatorily; and therefore he presseth them to get a full assurance of understanding about all these mysteries. When Christ was discoursing with his disciples after his resurrection, (*Luke* 24. 45.) it is said, *He opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures*; and then they did not take in what he spake only at the ear, but at the heart also. Thus (*Acts* 16. 14.) *The Lord opened the heart of Lydia, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul*; that is, he gave her an inward ear, and caused her to understand the things which he spake. Second-

Secondly Note.

Whatſoever we hear is loſt, and but ſcattered in the ayre, if we do not underſtand it.

Though we have it in our books, yea though we have it in our memories, 'tis loſt, if we underſtand it not; we read of a *book, ſealed within, and on the back-ſide, with ſeven ſeals,* (Rev. 5. 1.) we read alſo (*v.* 4.) that *John wept much, becauſe no man was found worthy to open and to read the book*: That ſealing of the book was nothing elſe but the ſhutting of it up from the underſtanding; and when Chriſt opened the book, he gave the underſtanding of it: the whole book of God is a ſealed book, unleſs we have an underſtanding, or a ſaving knowledge of the truths therein contained. What *John* ſaid (*Rev.* 13. 18.) of counting that myſterious number of the Beaſt, muſt be ſaid in its proportion of the whole myſterie of godlineſs, let him that hath underſtanding count and conſider them.

Note Thirdly.

Every underſtanding is not fit to receive the Truths of God.

An unregenerate man is not fit to receive any of the Truths of God; *The natural man* (that is, the man who hath nothing but nature in him) *perceiveth not the things of God*, he hath not a ſutable faculty for them; and as a natural mans underſtanding cannot at all receive the things of God, ſo every degree of a ſpiritual underſtanding cannot receive all the truths of God, or not all the things of God in all their truth. The Apoſtle diſtributes perſons into ſeveral degrees, and calls ſome *babes*, and others *grown or perfect men*; that is, ſuch as have an underſtanding fit to take in and digeſt the higheſt and deepeſt things of God; and hence it is, that Chriſt told his diſciples (*John* 16. 12.) who had a renewed underſtanding, only 'twas in a low degree, *I have many things to ſay unto you, but ye cannot bear them now*; I ſuppoſe the reaſon why Chriſt ſaith they could not bear thoſe *many things*, was not becauſe being *many*, they were too great a burden for their memories, (though poſſibly there might be ſomwhat in that) but their inability of bearing thoſe many things, was chiefly in their underſtanding. There are ſome truths, which though a man can remember, yet he cannot bear them; and the more he remembers them, the

the leſs he can bear them; the weight and myſteriouſneſs of them even cracks his brain, till he receives more light from God, and more ſtrength of underſtanding, he cannot bear them: *If thou haſt underſtanding, hear this*;

And hearken to the voice of my words.

This latter part of the verſe is but the repetition or further enforcement of the ſame thing, we had the like expreſſions *chap.* 33. 1. 8. and therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon this, only Note further from the whole.

The beginning of true wiſdome is to have a readineſs to hear, and to ſhew our ſelves teachable.

Some overween themſelves ſo much, as to matter of knowledge, that they will not be taught; they judge themſelves ſo learned, and fully inſtructed, that they will hear no more inſtruction, nor learn any other leſſon, they are paſt the School; yet alwaies they who know much in their own conceit, are leaſt knowing in truth and reality: there is nothing doth ſo much hinder the receiving of knowledge, as an imagination or proud prepoſſeſſion of it. *The ſluggard* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 26. 16.) *is wiſer in his own conceit, then ſeven men that can render a reaſon*: They which have leaſt reaſon, are the greateſt neglecters of it; only an underſtanding man is willing to hear, that he may gain more underſtanding. Therefore *Elihu* admoniſheth *Job*, *If now thou haſt underſtanding, hear this, and hearken to the voice of my words*: What *Elihu* would have *Job* hear and hearken to, followeth in the next verſe, and in thoſe which follow, to the end of the 33d verſe.

Verſ. 17. *Shall even he that hateth right govern? and wilt thou condemn him that is moſt juſt?*

This is matter indeed worth the hearing and hearkning to.

Shall even he that hateth right govern?

Shall he? He ſhall not, or at leaſt ſhould not, he ought not; he of all men is the unfitteſt man to govern, that is, to do all men right, who hateth right. The Interrogation leads us to this ſtrong Negation, or indignation rather; What! He that hateth right, whoſe very ſpirit is againſt it, whoſe affections withdraw from it, is he

משפט *Judicium, significat ordinem quo quicquid in loco conveniente constituitur, sic ordens judicium est, qui non subscribit divino ordini* Coc.

he made up for a Governour! The Hebrew word notes *right* from man to man; *Justice or righteousness consists in the due order and comly disposition of things and affairs, transacted and dispensed in this world from man to man, or between man and man*; it imports also that order into which the most wise providence of God placeth both things and persons; we may take it here in both or either of these sences; *Shall he that hateth right*

Govern.

חבש *Ligavit alligavit Dominari etiam significat, quod qui dominatur suis ligat præceptis legibusque transgressores.* Pagn.

The word rendered to *Govern*, hath a threefold signification in Scripture. First, and most properly, to *binde up*: Secondly, by a Metaphor, to *heal*; because there is so great a use of binding in healing; the skilful ligature of a wound, or of a broken limb, is of so much consequence in Chirurgery, or the art of healing, that binding alone is put for healing; that which is well bound, is in a fair way to healing. We finde both these acts put together in that great promise of the Churches glory under the Gospel, (*Isa.* 30. 26.) *Moreover the light of the Moon shall be as the light of the Sun*, &c. *in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.*

Numquid qui non amat judicium sanari potest. Vulg.

Many learned Translators render the word here, by binding or healing, or by binding, as it refers to healing. The Vulgar Latine gives it passively, *Can he who doth not love right be healed?* The sence of which reading is this; *God doth not use to heal or binde up the wounds of those who hate Right or Justice*: Why should the wounds of those Magistrates be healed, who have no care, by doing right, to heal the wounds of others? I shall not stay upon this Translation, because the Original Text clearly carryeth an active signification. And some who retain this sence of the word, translate it actively; *Shall, or will God heal him that hateth right?* Surely he will not: If a man hate Justice, and right, how can he expect that God should be a healer to him? And thus it is expounded in reference to *Job*, who complained that God did not heal him of his wounds, his wounds, though great, were not cured: now saith *Elihu*, *Will God heal him that hateth right*; that is, who doth not approve of that which is right; or, as it followeth, *who condemneth him that is most just*, as *Elihu* charged *Job* to have done.

An etiam odio habenti judicium obligaret (sc. vulnus.) Jun.

An etiam is qui odio habet jus obligaret vulneratum. Pisc.

Again, another renders, *Will he that hateth the right heal the wounded?*

wounded? The sence of which reading is given thus; Surely God who is ready to binde up and heal the wounds of those that are afflicted when they repent, is no hater of right, no perverter of Justice, as thou O *Job* hast said God doth; seeing God is ready to heal the wounds, and binde up the sores of humbled sinners, how unjustly hast thou charged him with perverting of justice? The Tygurine version gives it thus, *Will he that hates right, act the part of a Chirurgion?* Will he binde up and heal? Doubtless he will not, but will rather wound and afflict, vex and trouble more and more instead of being a healer. Either of these renderings bear a good sense of this Scripture; yet I shall rather take up our Translation, and insist upon it. And therefore

An qui odit judicium Chirurgos imitaretur. Tygur.

Thirdly, The word signifies tropically *to rule or govern*; and the reason ariseth clearly from the proper signification of it; because he that is a Ruler or a Governour, is also a binder and a healer: Magistrates binde the people that are under them to order, they binde them by their Laws. Laws are as bonds, they have a binding power, they binde either to obedience or to punishment; and therefore Magistrates are binders, they binde the unruly and disobedient, they binde with the rule of the Law, and with the penalties of the Law. When any break the rule of the Law, then they fall under the penalties of the Law, so that every way a Magistrate is a binder; and as he is a binder, so a healer; The Laws of Government by which people are bound, are for their healing, for the healing of their manners and corruptions; as also, for the healing of those whom they have oppressed or wounded by their evil manners and corruptions. Further, all Governours should, and righteous Governours will improve their power and authority for the healing of those differences that arise among their subjects, or those over whom they are set: In all these respects, Magistrates are *healers and binders*. Thus the Prophet (*Isa.* 3. 6, 7.) expresseth them, *When a man shall take hold of his brother, of the house of his father, saying, thou hast clothing, be thou our Ruler, and let this ruine be under thine hand*: Here is a breach, a ruine in the State or Commonwealth, let this be under thy hand, do thou undertake the cure of this; but *in that day shall he swear* (v. 7.) *I will not be a healer*: We put in the margin, *a binder*, that is, I will not be your Governour; your case is so desperate, and you are so obstinate in your way, that I dare not

Verbum ligandi חבש *sumitur pro imperare vel rerum potiri, quia qui imperant ligant*, &c. Mere. *Leges a ligando dicuntur.*

undertake your cure, *I will not be a healer to you*, or *I will not be your binder*; or as the reason of his refusal is there given by the Prophet, from his own inability or incompetency for that undertaking; *In my house is neither bread nor clothing, make me not a Ruler of the people.* Thus the word very significantly holds out the office and use of Governours; they are or ought to be binders or healers: the wounds of the Body politick need a healer as much as those of the body natural; *Governours are State-Physicians*: and therefore we read very well, *Shall he that hateth right govern?* Mr *Broughton* saith, *Can a foe to Judgement rule well?* taking this sence, *Elihu* doth two things in this verse.

First, He sheweth how unfit an unjust person is to rule; this he doth in the former part of the verse.

Secondly, He sheweth how unfit it is to condemn or censure a just Ruler; this he doth in the latter part of the verse. *Shall even he that hateth right govern?* He ought not. And shall he that governeth rightly be hated? Shall he fall under unrighteous condemnations, who condemneth others rightly? He should not. As he that is unjust is unfit to govern, so 'tis not only uncomly, but abominable to condemn a just Governour. This is the sum of the whole verse. From the former part of it already opened, *Shall he that hateth right govern?*

Observe.

First, *Some men are haters of Justice, Right, and Righteousness.*

What is there so good, but an evil man hateth it? and the better it is, the more he hateth it: How precious a thing is righteousness, yet 'tis hated; (*Mic.* 3. 1, 2.) *Hear, I pray you, O heads of Jacob*, &c. *Is it not for you to know judgement, who hate the good and love the evil?* How precious a thing is peace? and yet there are *peace-haters*; *My soul* (saith *David*, Psal. 120. 6.) *hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace.* How sweet a thing is light? the light of the Gospel, yet there are many light-haters, (*Joh.* 3. 20.) *He that doth evil*, (loving to do it) *hateth the light*: How precious a thing is holiness? and yet there are *holiness-haters*; how precious a thing is truth? and yet there are *truth-haters*; how infinitely precious is God? and yet there are *God-haters*; (Rom. 1. 30.) How lovely, how desireable is Jesus Christ, both as a Saviour and as a Sanctifier? yet even Jesus Christ (who hath loved us, and washed us with his own blood) is hated: There are many *Christ-haters*, as himself told the Jews (*John* 15. 24.) *They have both seen and hated both me and my Father.* And if there be that principle of abomination in the heart of man to hate God and Christ, what good is there that the heart of man may not set his hatred upon? *Elihu* supposeth that there are haters of Right and Justice, which are the most amiable things in the world, and should attract the love of all persons to them.

Secondly, When *Elihu* saith, *Shall even he that hateth right govern?* How disdainfully doth he speak of such?

Hence Note.

To hate right is a most hateful thing.

He is not worthy the name of a man that hateth right. When the Prophet *Elisha* told *Hazael* what strange things he should do, what havock he should make in the world, he said (2 *King.* 9. 13.) *But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?* as if he had said, to do such a thing, renders a man as vile and contemptible as a dog: 'Tis a piece of unrighteousness to reckon or number them among men, who are haters of that righteousness which should be exercised among men, and is the preservation of mankinde; not to honour righteousness is a hateful thing, not to do right at all times, and in all things, is a hateful thing; what is it then to hate right? How justly hateful are Justice haters!

Some may say, are there any indeed so bad as to hate right?

I answer, First, There are some who profusedly, plainly, with a bold and bare face hate the right; there is in all natural men a seed of this hatred, *The wisdome of the flesh is enmity against God*; and surely, if it be enmity against God, it must needs be enmity against all that is good; now as there is a seed of that enmity in every man's nature, so there will be the workings and fruits of that enmity in many mens lives.

Secondly I answer, He may be said to hate right that doth not approve right, that doth not love and delight in it; not to love, not to delight in that which is right, is to hate the right. As he that doth not love God, is a hater of God; the second Commandment speaks thus, *I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and shewing mercy to thousands of them*

them that love me, and keep my Commandments. Hating of God, and loving of God, divide the whole world; they that do not love God, hate him; there is no middle of participation between these two, between the love and hatred of God: so there is a hatred of Justice or Right in him who loves it not; though a man do not make profession against it, yet if he hath not an affection to it, he will at last be found amongst that most hateful company, the haters of righteousness: not to hate evil, is to love it, and not to love good, is to hate it in God's account. Many stand as neuters in the dayes of this world, but in that great day of the end of the world, there will be no neuters seen: all shall stand in two parts, either among the sheep or goats; and among all the sheep there will not be one found, who hath not been a lover of goodness and righteousness; nor one among all the goats, who hath not been (in the judgement and esteem of God) a hater of them.

Thirdly, They may be said (in a degree) to hate right, who though they have some love to it, yet love it in a less degree then they should, or less then they ought; *a lower or lesser degree of love, is a kinde of hatred* in Scripture language: The Law of *Moses* saith (*Deut.* 21. 15, 16, 17.) *If a man have two wives, one beloved, and another hated, and they have born him children; both the beloved and the hated, and if the first born son be hers that was hated; then it shall be when he maketh his son inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the son of the beloved first-born before the son of the hated,* &c. But what doth he mean by the wife that is hated? Surely the wife that is not so much loved; though he loved both truly, yet not loving both in the same degree, he is said to hate one of them: so I conceive that Scripture is to be understood (*Luke* 14. 26.) where Christ gives the rule concerning Disciple-ship; *If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my Disciple:* When Christ layeth this charge upon his Disciples, to hate wife, and children, &c. would he have his Disciples turn their hatred upon those relations? the rule of the Word forbids that: So then, his meaning is only this, if in case of following me, a man finde any stop or hindrance by these, he must not let out his love so to wife, and children, &c. as to hinder his coming to, or following of me. Every man must take off

off so much love from these dearest worldly enjoyments, as hinders men in following Christ; and he who through grace is enabled to do so, is in a true and clear Gospel sence said to hate them. That which we can leave for Christ, we hate in comparison of that love which we bear to Christ. Thus in the Text and Point, they may be said to *hate the right*, who bear not a due proportion of love unto it; not to love righteousness with highest & warmest affections, is a degree of hatred. Some love the right, but they love it lightly, they love it less then riches and gain; and and therefore for self-gain they turn aside from, and forsake the right. Some will speak fair for Justice, till the offer of private advantage either put out their eyes, or stop their mouths; he that loves not to do right to others more then to enrich himself, will quickly wrong others to enrich himself: Now he that upon any terms or considerations whatsoever (though it were to the advantage only of some others who are poor and distressed, much more when its for his own advantage) is drawn to pervert the right, is a hater of it. Remember, any lesser degree of love to that which is right, may at any time be interpreted the hatred of it; and when we love it less then our own concernments, we cannot resist temptations which entice us to do that which will declare a direct hatred of it.

Thirdly, From the whole tenour of these words, *Shall he that hateth right govern?*

Note.

They that hate right, or righteousness, are altogether unfit to Govern, or to be Governours?

Nothing is more contrary to the state of Government, or the qualification of a Governour, then to hate right; righteousness is the sphear wherein he ought to walk, and never to move out of it; 'tis the business he hath to do, the trade which he hath to drive; whatsoever he doth in that capacity, he must be doing righteous things. So far as any man hath the power of Government in his hand, if it be but over a family, much more over a Nation, he ought to do right; *Davids* prayer for himself as a King, and for his son who was to succeed him in the Kingdom, was only and altogether this, (*Psal.* 72. 1.) *Give the King thy judgements, O Lord, and thy righteousness unto the Kings son*; that is, teach both me

me and him what is right, give us a heart conformable to it, and a readiness of minde alwayes to do it: That's the scope of his prayer when he said, *Give the King thy judgements, O Lord, and thy righteousness to the King's son:* Nor doth he barely pray for the gift of judgement and righteousness, but he puts the stamp of God upon them; *Give them thy judgements, and thy righteousness.* It is possible for Kings to have a judgement of their own, and a righteousness of their own, which are not the judgements nor the righteousness of God. For as there is a righteousness of God, which some being ignorant of, trust to a righteousness of their own for the justification of their person; so there is a righteousness of God for the government of man, which some neglecting, use only a righteousness of their own, both in condemning and justifying other mens both persons and causes; Princes being in Gods place, should exalt the righteousnesse of God in the governing of men. And therefore the same *David* in his dying song spake thus (2 *Sam:* 23.3.) *He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the feare of God*; who ever he is he must be just, and he must be just in the feare of God, which he can never be, but in giving out the righteousnesse of God; that is, in dispensing that for righteousnesse, which is right according to the will of God. And if he must doe right thus, how shall he doe it, if he hate it? no man will doe that willingly or constantly which he hateth; he that hates right is so farre from doing it himselfe, that he cannot abide others should doe it. Whereas a governour, is not only to doe right himselfe, but to appoynt others to doe it, and to see that they doe it, or else to punish them for not doing it. The Rulers of the earth are sayd to *beare the sword* (Rom: 13.4.) And they are sayd *to be Shields* (Psal: 47.9.) They are shields to protect the good, and swords to take vengeance of those that doe evill; both which are the workes of righteousnesse. And if so, *shall ever he that hateth right governe?*

And wilt thou condemne him that is most just?

Fieri nè potest ut qui omnibus imperat, juris amans non sit, aut quicquam injuste agat. Merc:

The scope of *Elihu* in the former part of the verse was to demonstrate that God is no hater of right, or righteousnesse, for he is not only A Governour, but The Governour, all the world over, or over all the world, and it were a most absurd thing, to thinke that he should be the Governour of the world, and yet be a hater

of

of right; can it be imagin'd that he who ruleth all men, should wrong any man? Now seeing God who ruleth all is alwayes most righteous, *wilt thou (O Job) condemne him* (saith *Elihu*) *that is most just?* God our governour is so farre from hating, that he is ever promoting justice, he that is so, is most just, and wilt thou condemne him that is most just?

Wilt thou condemne?

To condemne is to sit in Judgement, and give sentence against another. Wilt thou condemne, or give sentence against God? *Wilt thou* (as some translate according to the strictness of the Original) *make him wicked, that is most just?* *Elihu* makes use of a very hard and severe word, and it is conceived that he purposely pitcht upon it, or pickt it out, to convince *Job*, that it is no small fault, or offence, to complaine of or to quarrell with the dealings of God. 'Tis indeed to condemne God, and to make him wicked, as the word imports; *Wilt thou condemne him*

that is most just?

Et an justum insignem impium facis? Heb:

כביר צדק *validum justū. i. e. qui valdè justus est.* Drus:

Here are two words; in the Hebrew we put them together, and so render them by a superlative, *most just*. Some translate, *Wilt thou condemne him that is strong and just?* that is, strongly just, mightily just; God is full of strength and might, so full that he, and he only is *Almighty*; yet his might never exceedeth right, nor his strength his justice. Strength and justice are commensurate in God. And while he is so strong, that he can doe what he will, he is so just that he will doe nothing but what is righteous.

Num eum, qui κατ' ἐξοχὴν justus est, ut deus omnium judicio est, in justitiæ damnare sustines. כביר *potest exponi validū, num justum et potentē eum qui simul et justus et potens est damnare audes, sed malo* כביר *exponere per* מאך *multum valdè, q.d. eum qui summe justus est audes damnare, de eo queri, quasi tibi sit iniquior.* Rab: Sel:

Further, I find others joyning the word *strong*, with the word *condemne*. As if *Elihu* had sayd, *Wilt thou so confidently, and pertinaciously, condemne the just God? To condemne God, though but a little, to passe the easiest sentence of condemnation upon him is bad enough; but wilt thou strongly condemne him?* We render clearely to the scope of the place, *Wilt thou condemne him that is most just?*

Hence note.

First, *God is most just, or altogether just.*

He is strongly just, mightily just; as he is strongly mercifull, putting Merc:

putting forth a power in pardoning sin, and shewing mercy, so he is strongly just, or altogether just. The rule given to Judges by *Moses* speakes thus, (*Deut:* 16. 20.) *That which is altogether just, shalt thou follow.* We put in the margin, *justice, justice, shalt thou doe*; that is, thou shalt doe pure Justice, nothing but Justice, or justice without the least mixture, tincture, or (if it be possible) without the least shadow of injustice. I may say, *justice, justice is God*, that is, he is *altogether just*, strongly just, everlastingly and unchangeably just. God is just under a three-fold notion.

Σημαίς ἔστιν ὁ πασῶν ἀρετῶν ἔχων. Phavor:

First, As to be just is taken *largely*, importing a person accomplished with concurrence of all perfections, and vertuous qualities. In that sence, I suppose, the Apostle useth the word (*1 Tim.* 1. 9.) *The law is not given for* (that is, to terrifie or condemne) *a just man*; that is, for a man who is holy and good. Thus God is *altogether just*; for he hath all the lines of perfection, of holinesse, and goodnesse centring in him, he is not only just and vertuous, but justice and vertue it selfe.

Secondly, To be just, imports the keeping of promises, and the performance of our word. He is a just man, who when he hath spoken, you may know what to have of him, and where to have him. Some give words, and you can get nothing of them but words, that's injustice, because our words binde us and should be as lawes to us. A man may chuse whether he will make promises, but when he hath promised, it is not in his choice, whether he will performe or no; his word bindes him. In this sence, *God is altogether just.* Whatsoever word you have had from God, (and he hath given us many comfortable words for every condition) God is a just God, and will performe it to a tittle. That Glorious and everlasting witnesse is borne to him by dying *Joshua* (Josh: 23. 14.) *And behold this day I am going the way of all the earth, and ye know in all your hearts, and in all your soules, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you: all are come to passe unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof.* In this sence, God is sayd to be, not only mercifull, but just in forgiving our sins (*1 John* 1. 9.) *If we confesse our sins, he is faithfull and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousnesse.* If we confesse our sins spiritually and believingly, deeply, humbly, and affectionately; if we confesse thus, he is just to forgive; why? because he hath given a promise to forgive those who make such confessions of sin. And thus 'tis in any other promise; he keepes his word, he keepes touch with man, he will not fayle nor come short in the least, therefore he is altogether just.

Thirdly, He is just in the strictest acception of justice, giving every one his due. It is possible for a man to be just in neither of the two former notions, he may neither be vertuous in his actions, nor a keeper of his word as a man, & yet he may be just as a Magistrate, just as in a cause committed to his determination. But God is just in all these three considerations of a just man, and therefore he is eminently, or altogether just. And I conceive, the latter of the three is chiefely intended here; *God is most just*, that is, he never did, nor ever will, give an undue or an undeserved sentence upon any man.

I might shew distinctly, that God is just, and how just he is; First, in rewarding those that doe well; Secondly, in punishing those that doe ill. And that because he doth it; First, by a law; Secondly, by a law published; Thirdly, by a law possible (our inability of keeping the law is consequentiall to the giving of it; man hath drawne it upon himselfe) though now he cannot performe it at all, yet God is just in punishing, because he sins against a law that he had a power (in his head or representative) to have fullfilled. Fourthly, God is just, because the penalties which he inflicteth flow from a right and just law (as the Apostle speaks, *Rom:* 7. 12.) *The law is holy, and just, and good*; and therefore all the awards that are grounded upon it must needs be just too. Fifthly, he punisheth justly, because he never punisheth but upon proofe, and evidence; yea he will make every mans Conscience a witnes against himself, or condemne him out of his own mouth. Sixthly, he punisheth justly, because he punisheth impartially, neither feare, nor hope, nor favour, can divert him (*Isa:* 27. 11. *Jer:* 22. 24.) Seventhly, he doth not only punish in a proportion to the law, but often in a proportion to the sin, and that not only to the measure of the sin, but to the manner of the sin; as that cruel king *Adonibezek* confessed, when himselfe was cruelly dealt with (his thumbs and great toes being cut off, *Judg:* 1. 7.) *As I have done so God hath requited me*: As if he had sayd, God is just not only because he hath punished me in measure according to my sin, but after the very same manner in which I sinned,

ned, he hath as it were hit my ſin in the eye of all beholders; what I have done may be ſeene by what I ſuffer.

Note, Secondly.

To condemne God, who is moſt juſt, is the higheſt poynt of injuſtice.

Wilt thou condemne him that is moſt juſt? wilt thou do ſuch a thing? what? condemne him that is moſt juſt! How great a wickedneſſe is this, if we conſider, Firſt, that what-ever God doth, we ought to be patient under it. Secondly, that whatſoever God doth, we ought to acquieſce or reſt quietly and contentedly in it; that's more then to be patient. Thirdly, that whatſoever he doth, we ought to approve and juſtifie God in it. Fourthly, that we ought to magnifie God whatſoever he doth, though his diſpenſations are bitter, & burthenſome; and if we do ſo we ſhall finde the bittereſt diſpenſations ſweete to us. Now if we ought to be patient under, to acquieſce in, to approve of, yea to magnifie and exalt the name of God in all his dealings with us and determinations concerning us, then how ſinfull is it to condemne him? What? ſhall ſuch poore creatures as we, take upon us to cenſure and condemne the workes of God! Some ſay it at leaſt in their hearts, if they had the reines of government in their hands, they would carry things evener then God doth; they would put all things right, if they might have the rule; if they might a while doe as they thinke fit, they would doe all things fitly. Some will talke thus arrogantly of their fitneſs to governe the whole world, who have not wit enough to governe their owne familyes; nor any grace at all to governe themſelves; yea they will preſume they could governe all men, who are ſcarce fit to governe a heard of ſwine, or as *Job* ſpeakes (*Chap:* 30. 1.) *to be ſet over the dogs of a mans flocke*; ſuch as theſe will take upon them to governe the world, & ſay they could do it better then 'tis done. Things ſhould not goe thus, if they might have their will. Though indeed (like that raſh and inconſiderate young man in the fabulous Poet, who deſired for one day at leaſt to be Charioteere to the Sun) if they might have their will, they would ſet the whole world a-fire, or put all into a flame in one day. Thus, *vaine man would be wiſe* (as *Zophar* ſayd, *Chap:* 11. 12.) *Though man be borne like a wild aſſes colt*, that is, being altogether unwilling to be governed by any

any right law, he would faine give the law to and governe all; what is this but to condemne the moſt juſt? and how great, how blaſphemouſly impudent a wickedneſſe is this!

But ſome may ſay, Did *Job* ever thus condemne God?

I anſwer; he did not condemne him in ſo many words, he did not formally ſit upon his tribunall, and condemne God, but he ſpake ſuch words as did ſhew a condemning of God, and *Elihu* juſtly condemned him for ſpeaking them.

Hence note, laſtly.

Not to ſubmit freely to, or to complaine of the dealings of God, is a condemning of God.

This is a hard ſaying, we may be almoſt aſtoniſhed to heare it, what? condemne God? yeas, ſo farre as any man murmurs againſt the dealings of God, ſo farre he condemnes God. The workes of God muſt be ſubmitted to, as wel as his word, his diſpenſations muſt be obeyed as wel as his lawes and conſtitutions. Our complaints of what he doth are cenſures of his perſon. We queſtion not only the ſoveraignty and power of God, but his very wiſdome and truth and juſtice, when we reluct againſt any of his actings or awards concerning us, though they produce our greateſt ſufferings. This *Elihu* further aggravates in the next words; *Is it fit to ſay to a King, Thou art wicked? and to Princes, Ye are ungodly?* If men will be mannerly to Princes, how much more mannerly ought they to be towards God?

JOB. Chap. 34. Vers. 18, 19.

Is it fit to say to a King, thou art wicked, and to Princes, ye are ungodly?
How much less to him that accepteth not the Persons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more then the poor? for they are all the work of his hands.

THese two verses are both an Illustration and a Confirmation or proof of what *Elihu* spake last in the close of the 17th verse, *Wilt thou condemn him that is most just?* Hereupon he infers

Vers. 18. *Is it fit to say to a King, thou art wicked?*

Those words, *Is it fit*; are not literally and expresly in the hebrew; and therefore some connect these two verses immediately with the former; *Wilt thou condemn him that is most just? Who saith to a King, O thou wicked? and to Princes, O ye ungodly?* That is, who is so just, that he spares not to tell the greatest Kings and Princes of their wickedness and ungodliness? Or as the Vulgar Translation hath it, *Who saith to a King, O thou Apostate?* I tell thee, Thou art fallen from that Justice and Righteousness which thou didst once exercise in thy Government. It is said of *Nero*, he had his *five years* wherein he govern'd excellently, but afterward he proved Apostate, cruelly tyrannizing over (instead of ruling) his people; as there are Apostates in Spirituals, so in Civils; *an apostate is an hypocrite revealed, an hypocrite is an apostate vail'd:* God unvails hypocrites of all sorts, and will not fail sooner or later to reprove their Apostacy. *It is better not to be good, then not to continue good:* Backsliders are worse then they who never set one step in the wayes of God and goodness.

Qui dicit Regi Apostata, qui vocat Duces impios &c. Vulg.
An dicentem Regi O nequam, O improbe ingenuè, condemnaves? Jun.
Quinquennium Neronis.

So then, according to this reading, the sence may be given out thus: As if *Elihu* had said, *How canst thou (O Job!) possibly imagine that God should be unjust, when he doth not forbear to tell the greatest Kings of their injustice, and convince them of it; he who calleth degenerate Kings Apostates, and unjust Princes wicked; he that is thus impartial in reckoning with Kings, and the mighty men of the*

the earth (as indeed God hath alwaies been, and will ever be) How should he be unjust? Wilt thou condemn the most Just? Even him who is so just, that he rebukes injustice whersoever he findes it, and who can finde it whersoever it is? (Psal. 105. 14.) *He reproved Kings for their sakes,* (that is, for the sake of his peculiar people, when they did them wrong,) *saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my Prophets no harm:* implying, that he trusts Kings with that great power to protect his anointed, and to save his Prophets from harm; and therefore would not take it well at their hands, if they abused their power to hurt and afflict them. This is a good reading, but I shall not insist upon it, though some insist much upon it, because I would rather favour our own Translation, and carry the Interpretation that way, as containing an argument to prove, that it is a most wicked thing to condemn God as unjust, because men are scarce any where found so presumptuous, or bold, as to say to a King, *Thou art wicked*, or to *Princes, ye are ungodly. It is much easier for any man, much more for great men to do evil, then for others to tell them so: And as the faults of Princes seldome finde reprovers, so it requires a great deal of wisdome, not to commit a fault in reproving them.*

Is it fit to say to a King thou art wicked?

Is this a comly thing? Or will Kings endure it? And if so, doth it become thee, O *Job*, to speak hardly of God? Or will he endure it? *Elihu* did not charge *Job* with speaking evil of God directly; but would intimate to him, that while he was so unquiet under the afflicting hand of God, and pressed him so often for a further hearing of his cause, he did very dangerously reflect upon his Justice; and that seeing we stand in awe of Kings and Soveraigne Princes, and dare not misbehave our selves before them, nor let fall an unreverend word concerning them, how durst he presume to speak any thing unseemly of God? *Is it fit to say to a King,*

Thou art wicked.

Kings are supream, they are cloathed with Soveraigne power over all persons within their Dominion; Is it therefore fit to use such course language, such down-right unhewen speeches in any

any address to them? *Is it fit to say to a King, Thou art wicked?* The original word imports the worst sort, the most infamous among wicked men; So Mr *Broughton* renders, *Is it meet that one say to a King, Belial?* Some give it in the Vocative case, Is it meet for a subject to say to his Soveraigne, *O thou Belial! O thou wicked one?* Dare any speak thus to a King?

This word *Belial* is often used in Scripture, to note, not only a wicked man in general, but an eminently wicked man, even a man in whom all wickedness is (as it were) centred and setled, the very lees and dregs of all men, who may be called wicked. When *Jezabel* procured and suborned two false witnesses against *Naboth*, it is said, *There came in two men, children of Belial,* (1 Kings 21. 13.) *and sate before him: and the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth in the presence of the people, saying,* &c. These witnesses were perjured persons; to tell a lye is the worst of sins, what then is it to swear a lye? no word could reach the height of this wickedness more fully, then to call them *children of Belial.* When the Lord comforted the Church with the glad tydings of the Gospel, (*Nah.* 1. 15.) *Behold the feet of those upon the mountains that preach peace; O Jerusalem keep thy solemn Feasts, perform thy Vowes;* He subjoyns this promise as a reason, *The wicked shall no more pass thorow thee, he is utterly cut off:* We put in the margin, *Belial shall no more pass thorow thee;* that is, thou shalt then be freed from those Belialists who formerly interrupted thy peace, by vexing and persecuting thee, or prophaned thy holy Assemblies by mixing themselves with thee: But I give thee assurance the time is coming, when Belial shall no more trouble thee. Yea Belial is a Title so full of wickedness, that it fits the Devil himself, whom the Scripture brands with that black mark, *The wicked one,* or *the evil one.* The Apostle puts that question with much holy disdain; (2 *Cor.* 6. 14, 15.) *What communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial?* that is, Christ with the Devil? They differ from the Devil only in flesh and blood, in nature they are as bad as he, who bear his name.

This may yet further appear, if we look into the Grammatical derivation of it, Belial, is commonly expounded a man without a yoke, or a man that will not be yoked; that is, a man who will not come under command, a lawless person; so we translate the Apostle's

Apostle's word, (1 *Tim.* 1. 9.) *The Law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly, and for sinners,* &c. that is, for the sons of *Belial,* or, for such as will not endure the yoke; the Law is a yoke, Christ calls the Law of the Gospel his yoke, (*Matth.* 11. 29.) and they that will not bear the yoke of Christ, shall never have benefit by the Cross of Christ; we must take up the yoke of Christ, if we would taste the fruit of the Cross of Christ. Now a *Beliallist*, will not hear of, nor have to do with the yoke; he is like the wilde Ass described in the 39th of *Job*, who will not be taught to plow, nor be bound in the furrow; you cannot make the wilde Ass work like the Oxe. Wicked men have hard and stony hearts, yet such soft, tender, and delicate necks, that they cannot abide the yoke; 'tis their bondage to be tyed to obedience.

Aliqui a בלי *sine, &* טול *jugo deducunt, qui nullis legum vinculis teneatur aut jugo.*

Again, The notation of the word *Belial*, imports a person of no use, or altogether *unprofitable*, a man that is good for nothing, a meer unthrift, or spendthrift, a man that neither doth good to himself, nor to any others; as if he were born only to spoil and devour all that is before him, as if he came into the world to eat other mens labours, and not to labour that he might have to eat. Christ calleth the idle or slothful servant, an *unprofitable servant,* (Matth. 25. 30.) and to be an unprofitable servant, is to be a son of *Belial*; one that hath no good in his heart, nor doth any good in his place, neither in his private nor publick capacity; neither in his own family, nor in the neighbourhood, and Nation where he lives. No man is born for himself, nor ought any man to live to himself. It were better not to live, then not to be doing good while we live. He that liveth only to profit himself, liveth to little purpose; to what purpose then doth he live, whose life is altogether unprofitable to himself? And indeed, he that is not in some respect or other a common good, or good to others, cannot be good, nor do any true good to himself; yet such is the wicked man represented under the notion of this Text. Seeing then there are such bad and base significancies in the bowels of this word; is it sufferable by a King? *Is it fit to say to a King, thou art Belial, or wicked?*

Alii a יעל *proficere deducunt, quasi significet hominem qui ad nihil sit utilis.* Merc.

What can be said more unfitly? What greater reproach can be cast upon a King (who ought to be a living Law, a breathing Law, as also the Keeper of the Law by way of conservation and protection)

protection) then to call him Belial, or one that will not keep the Law at all by way of obſervation? There are two wayes of keeping the Law, Firſt, By Conſervation; ſo Kings preſerve the Laws that they may have their free courſe to others, and be obeyed by others; in which ſence Kings are commonly called *Keepers of both Tables*. Secondly, By obſervation; and as in the former ſenſe 'tis the prerogative of Kings to be Keepers of the Law, ſo it is their piety and their goodneſs to be Keepers of them in the latter. 'Tis poſſible a King may be a Keeper of it by Obſervation; but then he ſhines moſt bright in the ſphear of his Royal Soveraignty, when he is every way a keeper of the Law of God, and (ſo far as they reſpect himſelf) of his own.

Further, Is it fit to ſay to a King, *Belial?* As *Belial* deſigns an unprofitable perſon, a man good for nothing, a man of no uſe; what? Upon the Throne, and yet of no uſe to a Nation? How high an indignity is this to Regal dignity? Kings are ſet up for the greateſt uſe, for the moſt important ſervices, even for the profit and advantage of mankinde, eſpecially of all within their Kingdoms and Dominions; as all are to ſerve them in their ſtate, ſo they count it their chiefeſt honour to advance the peace and profit of all their peaceable and profitable ſubjects: Therefore nothing can be ſaid more diſhonourably to a King then this, Thou art good for nothing, an unprofitable perſon, *Belial. Is it fit to ſay to a King, Thou art wicked?*

And to Princes, ye are ungodly?

Principes hic vocantur נדיבים *a liberalitate & munificentia: quaſi tu dicas* ἐυεργέτας, Druſ.

The word rendred *Princes*, ſignifies *munificent, bountiful, free, willing*; ſo Princes are called, to ſhew what they are or ſhould be, men of bountiful, noble, munificent, heroick, free ſpirits, open hearted, and open handed; they who are ſo, are Princes in truth as well as in Title. The holy Spirit of God, or God the holy Spirit, is called a *Princely Spirit*, (Pſal. 51. 12.) we read it *Free Spirit*; and this free Princely Spirit of God, makes all his people of a free Princely ſpirit, of a large heart, both as to duty Godwards, and as to charity man-wards; (*Pſal.* 110. 3.) *In the day of thy power the people ſhall be willing*; they ſhall be as Princes; they ſhall ſerve thee as ſons, not as ſlaves; a Royal Spirit is conveyed into them by the Spirit in the day of the Power of Jeſus Chriſt,

Chriſt, or when he conquers them to the obedience of himſelf. By this appellation, worldly Princes, the Princes of this world are expreſſed in ſacred language, that ſo their very names might minde them of being ſuch, and of doing ſuch things as are the ornament both of their perſons and places. Theſe two high Titles in the Text, Kings and Princes, are ſomtimes taken for the ſame; and in ſtricteſt ſence, Princes are the next degree, or but one remove from Kings.

Again, There are ſome called Princes, who have the ſupreame power within their own Territories. Others are called Princes, who have a delegated or derived power from Kings. The Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſuch, (1 *Pet.* 2. 13.) charging the Church and people of God, *to ſubmit to every Ordinance of man for the Lords ſake, whether to the King as ſupream; or unto Governours as ſent by him, for the puniſhment of evil doers, and for the praiſe of them that do well. Elihu* brings in both, for the fuller confirmation of his point, and the ſtronger conviction of *Job*, *Is it fit to ſay to a King, thou art wicked? and to Princes* (who ſtand about his Throne, and ſerve him in his Government) *ye are ungodly?* Ye regard neither right nor reaſon, neither what's fit to be done, nor what to be adviſed? That's the ſence of the words as they are an argument from the leſs to the greater; If it be an uncomely and undecent thing (ſaith *Elihu*) *to ſay to a King thou art wicked? and to Princes ye are ungodly? How much more to him that accepteth not the perſons of Princes?* &c.

Hence Note.

Firſt, *Men are not all of a rank, or all are not of an equal ſtate in this world.*

This Text ſpeaks of Kings and Princes; and the moſt of men are inferiour not only to Kings, but to Princes. God hath not made man upon earth as *minims* in writing, all of a height; but as in the alphabet of Letters, ſome are longer and deeper then others; ſo in the Alphabet of mankinde, ſome men are bigger and higher then others. Kings and Princes are but men, yet they are men in a great letter, or they are among men as the *Aleph* among the letters, which as it is firſt in order, ſo it ſignifies a Prince, a Chief, a Leader. And if the moſt wiſe God had not ordered ſuch an inequality among men, how ſhould order have been kept

among men? Nothing (considering the corruptions and lusts of men) can be more unequal then that equality which some have vainly contended for among men. All men would fall down into confusion, if some were not above. *That which keeps all up, is, only that some are uppermost, Kings and Princes.*

Secondly, (which is here principally aimed at,) Note.

It is most uncomly and sinful, to revile or give reproachful words to Kings or Princes.

When we say *It is not fit*, we say less then the thing is, or then the Text intendeth; there is more evil in it then a bare unfitness, 'tis indeed a very great wickedness, and ungodliness, *to say to a King, thou art wicked, and to Princes, ye are ungodly.* To say so, is expressly against the Rule, (*Exod.* 22. 28.) *Thou shalt not revile the gods*, (or, as we put in the margin, *Judges*) *nor curse the Ruler of thy people*: And the Apostle *Paul* quotes this Text (*Acts* 23. 5.) when himself had slipt in that point, as he stood before the Judgement seat, and pleaded his own integrity; for when *Ananias* the high Priest *commanded them that stood by to smite him on the mouth*; *Paul said unto him, God shall smite thee, thou whited wall*: This drew a reproof upon him presently from them that stood by (*v.* 4.) *Revilest thou Gods high Priest?* And what doth *Paul* answer? (*v.* 5.) *I wist not Brethren, that he was the high Priest; for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the Ruler of thy people.* There hath been much dispute about that answer, *I wist not that he was the high Priest*: Certainly *Paul* saw and knew that he was the high Priest; and it is as certain, that he did not tell a lye, when he said, *I wist not that he was the high Priest*: His meaning I conceive was only this, as if he had said, having received such *unjust usage in the Court, as to be openly smitten in time of hearing, I confess I was in a passion, and did not consider, as I ought, that it was the high Priest; I spake rashly and unadvisedly.* *I wist not*, that is, *I deliberated not with my self who it was I spake to, for I ought not to have used such language; the Scripture also having forbidden it, which saith, Thou shalt not curse the Ruler of thy people.* It will not bear us out, to use ill words to Magistrates, though (as *Paul's* case was) we are ill used by them. *Shimei* taking the advantage of *David's* affliction, rose up to this height

height of impudence against him, mentioned with indignation by *Elihu* in the Text, he openly and to his face called him *Belial*, (2 *Sam.* 16. 5. 7.) *Come out thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial*: But we know what the issue was, he paid dear for it at last; though *David* forgave him at present, and did not suffer *Abishai* to take a sudden revenge, yet upon his death-bed he delivered him over to his son *Solomon*, to deal with him as he should see good. And so great is the offensiveness and unfitness of speaking thus unto a King, that the Jewes joyned it with blasphemy against God himself. We read (1 *Kings* 21. 13.) how two false Witnesses came against *Naboth*, saying, *Naboth blasphemed God and the King*; as much as to say, we heard *Naboth* say of the King, *Belial*; And as soon as these two had brought in their evidence against him, that he had blasphemed God and the King, they drew him out, and stoned him: Blasphemy against God was death by the express letter of the Law, (*Lev.* 24. 15, 16.) It was also death by the same Law for any man to curse his Father or his Mother (*Exod.* 21. 17.) And because the King is (*Pater Patriæ*) the father of his Country, it seems the cursing or blasphemy of him, was also punishable by death. The Apostle *Jude* useth an equivalent word in the Greek (*Ep. of Jude, v.* 8.) reproving a wicked Sect in those times; They fear not *to blaspheme, or speak evil of Dignities*: There is blasphemy against Princes, who are titular Gods, as well as against the only true God. Kings are to be feared, to be submitted to, they are to be prayed for, therefore not to be reviled. *Is it fit to say unto a King, Belial?*

Yet this doth not stop the mouths of all men from telling Kings and Princes their faults, nor doth it justifie a silent dissembling of them; much less doth it open the mouthes of any to dawb Kings and Princes with the untempered morter of flatteries; Kings are no more to be flattered then they are to be reproached. Dignities must not be spoken evil of, yet they may be prudently and humbly told of their evils, and informed of their failings plainly. When *Eliah* met *Ahab*, who said, *Art thou he that troubleth Israel?* *Eliah* answered, (1 *Kings* 18. 18.) *I have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy fathers house, in that ye have forsaken the Commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baal.* And we read how boldly *Elisha* carried it to the King of Israel, (2 *Kings* 3. 13, 14.) *What have I to do with thee? Get thee to the Prophets of thy father,*

father, and to the Prophets of thy mother: And Elisha said, as the Lord of Hosts liveth before whom I stand; Surely, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the King of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee. Thus the Prophets dealt with much gracious severity towards mighty Princes. The Prophet *Isaiah* feared not to say (*Isa.* 1. 10.) *Hear the word of the Lord ye Rulers of Sodome, Give ear unto the Law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah*; implying, that the Rulers of Jerusalem were then but such as the Rulers of Sodome once were, and that the people were no better then the people of Gomorrah; and it is conceived, that for this plainness and liberty of speech, which the Prophet *Isaiah* used toward the Princes and Rulers of Judah, he was put to death, being cut or mangled asunder with a wooden Sawe. One might think that *Ezekiel* did much forget himself, when he gave those opprobrious terms to *Zedekiah* King of Judah, (*Ezek.* 21. 25.) *And thou prophane wicked Prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end*; yet he sinned not in this harsh reproof of his sin, because commanded of God to do it, and specially directed by the holy Spirit. The Prophets might not diminish a word, but must give out what God gave in. *John* the Baptist *reproved Herod for Herodias his brother Philips wife, and for all the evils which he had done,* (Luke 3. 19.) And Jesus Christ himself called *Herod*, *Fox*; (Luke 13. 32.) The Prophets were often Instructed and Commissioned to prophesie against the *mountains*; that is, against the Princes and Powers of the world; and therefore take the state of the point, and of our duty about it, in these few conclusions, that we may not run upon the rocks either way; neither upon the rock of blasphemy against Kings and Princes on the one side, nor upon the rock of flattery on the other.

First, The Power or State of Princes must never be reviled nor evill spoken of; kingly Power and Authority is alwayes to be reverenced and honoured; though the Prince be wicked, yet his Power is to be reverenced, and that's the purest reverence. For to reverence the power of Princes, only, because, or when they are good, and do us good, and rule every way according to our mind, this is but a piece of selfishness; but when Princes are evill and bring evills upon us, yet to bear respect to the Power and Authority which they Exercise; this is to honour God, and to

Regia per se dignitas, nunquam non est colenda, etiam cum princeps iniquus est.

to give true submission to his ordinance. Whatsoever the person is, the power must be reverentially submitted to.

Secondly, It is high wickedness to speak evill of the persons of just and righteous Princes; that every man will acknowledge.

Thirdly, Kings and Princes must not be reproved for personall or private faults publickly. To doe so is against the rule in any mans case; much more in the case of Kings and Princes.

Fourthly, Kings are not to be reproved for any of their faults, but by those who have a Call to it: that was the reason of the liberty which the old Prophets used towards Kings, they were specially commanded and Commissioned by God for it, and the peril was upon their own heads if they did it not; it is not for every one to reprove Princes, but for those that are called to it.

Lastly, Even those that are called to it must doe it with much submission; though they must not doe it to halves and deceitfully, yet they are to doe it respectfully. It is not fit to say to a King, *Belial*; such rough and unhewne language is not for Princes: their faults must only be insinuated, if that may serve, as *Nathan* dealt with *David*, who though he knew what his sin was, yet he did not say to him, *Thou murtherer, thou Adulterer*, but intimated the matter by a parable, and made him covertly, or in a third person charge himselfe, before he charged him, or applyed the parable personally to him, with, *Thou art the man*. When *Miriam* the Sister and *Aaron* the Brother of *Moses* spake against him, because of the *Ethiopian* woman whom he had married (*Numb.* 12. 1.) though they were thus neerely related, yet speaking irreverently of *Moses* the Chiefe Magistrate, the Lord sayd to them (*v.* 8.) *Wherefore were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?* Yet how common is this sin? the tongues of men walke exceeding loolly in their discourses about the persons and powers of Princes; And we every where find most pleased to heare well of themselves, and ill of others, or to speake well of themselves, and ill of others, and the higher they are who are spoken of, or of whom they speake evill, the more they are pleased both in hearing and speaking evill of them. How unruly are their tongues, who cannot forbeare their rulers! Thus much of *Elihu's* question, as it is resolved into a Negative proposition, *It is not fit to say to a King, thou art ungodly*. We may further consider it as an argument from the greater to the lesse, to prove, That it is a most wicked

wicked thing to speake a word unduely of God. *Is it fit to say to a King, Thou are wicked? and to Princes, ye are ungodly?*

Vers. 19. *How much less to him that accepteth not the persons of Princes?*

Who is that? The words are a cleare Periphrasis of God, he accepts not the persons of Princes. As if *Elihu* had said; the Kings and Princes of the earth, expect such great respect from their subjects, that no man should dare to censure them or speake evill of them, though they doe evill, or deale unjustly; how much more unfit is it to speake evill of God, or to charge his government with injustice, who never doth any evill, all whose wayes are not only just, but justice. He that accepteth not the persons of Princes, who are the greatest of men, can have neither will nor motive to deale unjustly with any man. I shall not stay to shew what it is to accept persons? because that hath been shewed at the 7th verse of the 13th Chapter, as also Chapter 32. 21. only I'le give it in one word; To accept persons is to have more respect to the man then to the matter; and that's a very common fault among men, and as commonly condemned by God. 'Tis a received axiom, *He that would or doth put on the person of a Judge, must put off the person of a friend*; that is, he must not be sway'd by any respect whatsoever of friendship, or allyance, but must judge purely as the cause deserveth.

Nor shall I stay to urge the greatness of the sin of speaking any thing uncomely of God, that also hath been spoken to in many former passages of this Chapter. Only from these words, *How much lesse to him that accepth not the person of Princes?*

Note First.
That which ought not to be done or spoken to the greatest of men, ought much lesse to be either done or spoken to God.

The reason is, because, first, God is infinitely more to be reverenced then any man. Secondly, because God is infinitely more able to take vengeance, and certainly will, of any that shall doe or speake evill to him, then the greatest among the children of men. Yet how many are there who dare not offend a man, not a great man especially, either by word or deed, who are not afraid by

by both to offend and provoke the great God? O remember, the force of this text; If it be not fit to speake unduely of Princes, How much lesse of him that *accepteth not the persons of Princes?*

Hence note, Secondly.
God is no accepter of persons.

He hath no respect to Princes in prejudice to truth and righteousnesse, *but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousnesse* (be he never so poore) *is accepted with him*, (Acts 10. 35.) and in every nation he that feareth him not, but worketh unrighteousnesse (be he never so great) is unacceptable yea abominable to him. The Scripture often attributes this glory to God, (*Deut:* 10. 17. 2 *Chron:* 19. 7. *Gal:* 2. 6. *Col:* 3. 25.) And as it is the glory of God, that he is no accepter of persons, so it is the duty of man (*Deut:* 1. 17.) Judgement must proceed and conclude with respect to the rule, and command of God, not with respect to the persons of men, or our relations to them. *Levi* was highly commended for this (*Deut:* 33. 9.) *who sayd unto his father and to his mother, I have not seene him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his owne children*, &c. When man accepteth not the persons of men he acteth most like God, of whom *Elihu* saith, *He accepteth not the persons of Princes,*

Nor regardeth the rich more then the poore.

That's a further description of God; He doth not regard, that is, acknowledge or know the one more then the other; He is (in the best things) as communicative to, and converseth as familiarly with the poore as the rich; yea, he doth not value or prize the rich man more then the poore; the poor man is worth as much as the rich man in Gods account; suppose the rich man worth thousands, yea ten thousands of gold and silver, and the poore man so poore that he is not worth a shilling, yet in the account of God the poor man is worth as much as the rich man.

נכר agnoscere, familiariter tractare.

The Scripture speakes of two sorts both of rich and poor men; There are men rich in spiritualls, such Christ intimates, who are (*Luke* 12. 20.) *rich towards God*, or as he speakes of the Church of *Smyrna* (Rev: 2. 9.) rich in grace, *I know thy poverty, but thou art rich*; That is, I know thou art poor in earthly pelfe, but rich in spiritualls. The Apostle *James* puts the question (*Chap:* 2. 5.) *Hath not God*

God chosen the poore of this world rich in faith, and heires of the kingdome. Now, it is most certaine, that God regardeth the rich in spiritualls, more then the poore in spiritualls, he highly regardeth those that *are poore in spirit*, and pronounceth them *blessed* (*Math:* 5. 3.) *for theirs is the kingdome of heaven*; But he regardeth not those who are poore in spiritualls; not them especially who boast of their spirituall riches when they have none (they that have them are thankfull for them, they do not boast of them) as the Church of *Laodicea* did, of whom Christ sayd (*Rev:* 3.16, 17.) *I will spew thee out of my mouth, because thou sayest I am rich & encreased in goods, and knowest not that thou art poore.* Thus you see, there are a sort of rich men, whom Christ regardeth more then the poore of that sort. But as poore and rich are distinguished meerely by aboundance and want, by the smallness and greatness of their portion in the things of this world, as *Dives* and *Lazarus* in the parable were, so he regardeth not the rich more then the poore. When a poor man is gracious as wel as poore, God regardeth him more then any rich man who hath no grace; And when either both have grace alike, or both are alike without grace, he regardeth them both alike. When rich and poore have grace, they are both greatly regarded, and when neither of them have grace, neither of them are at all regarded by the God of all grace. Thus 'tis plaine, *God regardeth the rich no more then the poore, nor the poore any whit lesse then the rich.*

שוע *est dives opulentus; quidam volunt deductum a* ישע *servando quod multos servare et juvari possit, vel a* שוע *clamando quod opulenti liberiùs et audaciùs loquantur.*

The word rendred *rich*, signifieth also *bountifull* (*Isa:* 32. 5.) 'Tis also rendred, *The helpfull, the saving man*; for though rich men are not alwayes helpfull with their riches, nor ready to save others in distresse; yet rich men may doe both: they have alwayes in their hand power and usually opportunity to be helpfull to the poore, and to save the distressed. And surely, *as the Lord regardeth not the rich more then the poore*; so he regardeth those rich men least of all, who have no regard to helpe and save the poore. Once more, Some derive the word which we translate *rich*, from a roote which signifieth to *clamour*, or to speake out and boldly, which complyes wel with that sentence of *Solomon* (Pro: 18. 23.) *The poore useth entreaties* (that is, he speaketh humbly or by way of supplication) *but the rich answereth roughly.* And as God regardeth not the rich more then the poore, so he regardeth those rich men least, who speake loudly and roughly to the poore. Having thus

thus opened the assertion of *Elihu*, that *God regardeth not the rich more then the poore*; let us consider, The reason of it in the next words.

For they are all the work of his hands.

As if he had sayd, God cannot but deal impartially with all, because all are the work of his hands: what reason hath he to respect one more then another, seeing the one is no more to him then t'other, they are all the work of his hands. Man as man is *the off-spring of God* (Acts 17. 28.) He is also *the work of his hands*; that is, man is made by his power; As man descendeth from man, so he is called the fruit of the womb; but as man is the off-spring of God, so he is called the worke of his hands, and his hands have wrought the poor man as well as the rich; *They are all the work of his hands* in a two-fold respect.

First, In their naturall constitution; God hath moulded them in the same fashion, he hath given each of them a body and a soul; A body framed of the same parts, a soule consisting of the same powers. God hath bestowed as much care and cost upon the making of a poore mans body and soule, as upon the rich mans. The richest man in the world, cannot boast that he hath any one member in his body or faculty in his soule, more then a poore man hath.

Secondly, Look upon the rich and poore in their Civil state, and so likewise they are the work of his hands: and that I conceive, is here intended as much as, if not more, then the former; not only is God the maker of the poor and of the rich in their naturall state, soule and body; but as poor, and rich, he is the maker of them; that is, he maketh one man poore, and another man rich, as himselfe pleaseth. (*Prov:* 22. 2.) *The rich and the poor meet together, the Lord is the maker of them all.* He hath made them men, and he hath made them rich or poore men. There is as much of the power and wisdome of God seene in making some men poore and others rich, as there is in making them men; yea God thinks himselfe as much honoured in our acknowledgements that the poore with their poverty, as that the rich with all their riches, *are the work of his hands.*

Hence Note.

First, *Poor men are as much the work of God as the rich.*

 As

As they have the same nature, and are of the same matter, as they are both made of the same stuff, or are both of a piece, so they have the same maker; and their maker hath been at as much charge in the making of the one, as in the making of the other; yea, and usually, the poore man yeilds him a better rent, and brings more into his Treasury then the rich man doth.

Secondly Note.

It is the Lord who makes men poor, and makes men rich.

Agur prayed (*Prov.* 30. 8.) *Give me neither poverty nor riches.* *Agur* knew poverty was a gift of God as well as riches. It hath been said (though prophanely) *Every man is the fashioner of his own fortune, or the contriver of his own condition.* Some who acknowledge God hath made them men, think they have made themselves rich, or great men; and we commonly look on those who fail in their worldly Estates, that they have made themselves poor and low in the world. I grant, there is a sense wherein men make themselves rich, and make themselves poor; that is, when they do either by their sins. God is not so engaged in the making of a man rich, when he enricheth himself by his sin, by deceiving or oppressing his brethren, as when he groweth rich in a way of righteousness: He that is enriched by oppression, or deceit, or sets his nest on high by flattery, or by fraud, cannot thank God for his riches, or honours; and if he doth, he blasphemously makes God a partner in those sins by which he hath got his riches and honours. For though it be a truth that there is a hand of God in his gettings, (for all the craft, and policy, and oppression which men use, will never be able to make them either rich or great, if God did not permit and order it so) yet the heart of God is not with him in it, and God will not own his own hand in giving them wealth or power, further then as they are a testimony against them, of his goodness, and their ingratitude. We may also say of some poor men, they have made themselves poor, not God; He made *Job* poor, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away*, was his humble acknowledgement (*chap.* 1. 21.) but there are some, of whom we cannot so much say God hath made them poor by his sad providences to them, as that they have made themselves poor by their idleness and improvidence, or by their prodigality and vain profuseness; yet even of such poor men we may truly say, there

there be a righteous hand of God upon them in leaving or giving them up to the lusts of their own heart, their lazineſs, or laviſhneſs, which produce their utter undoing, and bring them to a morsel of bread. So that let men be in what condition they will, the Lord is the former of it. The diligent hand maketh rich, but it is with the blessing of God; and when an indiligent man becomes poor, it is the curse of God upon him for his sin, as well as the consequent of his sin. Yea, when an honest diligent man becomes poor, (that's the case of some) it is the Lords with-holding of his blessing, which makes all his labours fruitless and successless; such a man is indeed one of God's poor, or a poor man of God's making; and God will surely make the poverty of such a man (if he continue in a believing dependence upon him, and in an humble submission to him, if he know how to want as well as to abound, how to be hungry as well as to be full, and in every estate hath learned therewith to be content, as the holy Apostle had, then (I say) God will surely make the poverty of such a man better to him then riches, or the largest portion of this worlds enjoyment. The poor of God's special making, are under his special keeping and blessing: As they have but little, so they want nothing; God himself will always be not only enough, but all to them.

Take two further inferences from the whole verse.

Firſt,

Princes, great and rich men must not expect to fare better with God because of their greatness or riches. For,

He doth not regard the rich more then the poor.

Secondly,

The meanest man needs not fear that he shall fare the worse before God for his meanness.

The most high God will not overlook those in a low estate, he regardeth the poor as well as the rich; and that's matter of great comfort to the poor, when disregarded by the rich. Though the Lord doth not make all men of an equal respect in the world, 'tis his will that some men should be more regarded by men then others are, yet himself (in the sence opened) beareth an equal respect to them all; *He regardeth not the rich more then the poor, for they are all the work of his hands.*

JOB. Chap. 34. Vers. 20, 21, 22.

In a moment shall they die, and the people shall be troubled at midnight, and pass away: and the mighty shall be taken away without hands.
For his eyes are upon the wayes of man, and he seeth all his doings.
There is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.

IN these three verses *Elihu* doth two things principally; First, He sets forth the judgements of God; Secondly, He gives an account of the equity of them. He sets forth the judgements of God,

First, More generally, Upon People and Nations.

Secondly, Upon Princes and Governours; All this in the 20th verse. And in this judgement of God upon Nations, we may take notice,

First, Of the nature of it, and how it is described: and that is laid down three wayes. First, *They shall die.* Secondly, *They shall be troubled.* Thirdly, *They shall pass away.* Under these Notions the judgement of God upon People and Nations is expresst.

Secondly, We may here consider the suddenness of all this, *In a moment they shall die.*

Thirdly, We may consider the season, (or rather as to man, the unseasonableness) of it, it shall be (though in a dreaming time) when they little dream of it; *The people shall be troubled at midnight.* Thus we have the judgement or sad dispensation of God described in this 20th verse, both as to the acts of it, and likewise as to the manner of it upon the people.

Elihu having shewed the judgement of God upon the people in the former part of this 20th verse, declares also his judgement upon the Princes in the latter end of it; *The mighty shall be taken away without hand.* Where we see, First, How Princes are expressed or called, *They are the mighty.* Secondly, What kinde of judgement befalleth them, *They are taken away.* Thirdly, The manner how this is brought about, *They are taken away without hand.* From

From the matter of the judgement of God both upon people and Princes, *Elihu* proceeds to give the reason why the Lord deals thus with both; This he doth in the two verses following.

First, Because of their sin; *They are workers of iniquity*; in the close of the 22th verse.

Secondly, Because, as they are workers of iniquity, so God is fully acquainted with all their iniquity, *&c. He seeth all their works*, and the iniquity of their works, nothing can cover it or them from his sight; and therefore, as *Elihu* asserts the omniscience of God positively in the 21th verse, so negatively in the 22th verse, *There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.* Now seeing the works of those Nations and Princes were naught, and the naughtiness of them was evident to God, how could he but punish them? And how just and righteous is he in punishing of them? By all this *Elihu* clears his general Assertion, or the point he drives at all this chapter over, namely, to prove that God is righteous; against which position, he tells us before, *Job* having spoken dangerously, he was engaged to maintain it vigorously; which he doth here, especially in that eminent branch of it, mentioned at the 19th verse, *That he accepteth not the persons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more then the poor.* For, Princes as well as common people fall under his hand. So much for the parts and resolution of these three verses, as also for the general scope of them.

Yet before I go on to the particular explication of them, I would only minde the Reader of another Translation of the whole 20th verse, which varieth somwhat from ours, rendring it as a description of the judgement of God upon Princes, by the violence of the people; whereas according to our Translation, it is a description of the judgement of God both upon people and Princes. The Translation I mean, is that of the Vulgar Latine, which runs in this form.

Vers. 20. *Suddenly shall they die, at midnight the people shall be in a tumult, and shall pass over, and take away the violent man without hand.*

Subito morientur & in media nocte turbabuntur populi, & pertransibunt, & auferent violentum absque manu. Vulg.

This Reading, and the expositions given upon it, prove, That God is so far from accepting the persons of Princes, that he does not only tell them their own, and reprove them to their face for their

their wickedness and Apostacy (as was shewed from the former reading of the 18th verse) but deprives them also of their dignity, and pulls them from their power; And he doth it in such a manner, that every man may understand and see the hand of God in it, because they see no hands in it. The less of man appears in any work of providence, whether it be in a way of mercy or of judgement, the more of God is to be acknowledged in it: and where nothing of man appeareth, all, or the whole must be attributed unto God. The judgement which *Elihu* speaks of here, seems (according to this Interpretation) to have much of man in it; yet because the men supposed to be in it, are looked upon as such as can do little in it, or ought to do nothing in it, therefore 'tis said to be done *without hands*. Histories have given many examples, and dreadful instances of such calamities falling upon Princes by the rising of the people; and then they are said to be *taken away*

Without hand,

That is, Without any foreseen appearance of such a mischief; a hand which was not thought of being lifted up against them. It is said of wicked *Zimri*, who slew his master, that when he saw the people conspire against him, and the City taken, *he went into the Palace of the King's house, and* (in the heat of his rage) *set it on fire, and burnt the Kings house over him, and died,* (1 Kin. 16. 18.) *Justine* reports the like conclusion (upon a like occasion) of *Sardanapalus*, that effeminate and voluptuous Monarch of the Assyrian Empire. They who prosecute this Translation, conceive *Elihu* reflecting upon *Job* in all this, who was very uncivilly treated by his own people, from whom he had deserved highest respects, as he complained at the 30th chapter, they raised up against him the wayes of their destruction; they used him very rudely, even despightfully; and he was in a pining consuming condition, as a man taken away without hand. But I shall not insist upon this reading, but take the words according to the scope before given, as a description of a mixt judgement from God; a judgement partly upon the people, and partly upon Princes, a judgement upon the many, and a judgement upon the mighty; *In a moment shall they die.*

רגע *Punctum momentum, tempus exiguum*

In a moment.

The Text is, *a moment they die*; Nor, that they shall die but a moment,

moment, or be only for a moment dead, but they shall die before a moment is over; there is an Elipsis of the preposition [*Beth*,] in the Hebrew, which we supply in our Translation, *In a moment they shall die*: A moment is the least particle or parcel of time; we cannot imagine any thing shorter then a moment, 'tis the very point of time, (*Psal.* 30. 5.) *His anger endureth for a moment*, (saith *David*, when he would shew how very short (comparatively) the anger of God towards his people is) *but in his favour is life*: Thus *Solomon* (Prov. 2. 19.) *He that speaketh truth, his tongue shall be established; but a lying tongue is for a moment*: A lye cannot last long; he that speaks truth, what he speaks to day, is good to morrow, and to morrow, and will be good for ever; but a lying tongue is for a moment; that is, his lies will be discovered, and usually they are quickly discovered; though he live long to tell lies, or doth nothing but tell lies as long as he liveth, yet his lyes are not long lived. *Job* describing the joy of the hypocrite (*chap.* 20. 5.) saith, *It is but for a moment*; like a fire of thorns, a blaze and gone: when the Apostle would strengthen and encourage the hearts of believers against all the troubles and sorrows of this present life, he calls them, (2 *Cor.* 4. 17.) First, *light*, Secondly, *short*; *Our light afflictions that are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* And that we might know how quick the devil was at his work with Christ, the Scripture saith (*Luke* 4. 5.) *He shewed him all the Kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.* As to shew the instantaneousness of our change from death to life in the resurrection, it is said, (1 *Cor.* 15. 52.) *In a moment, in the twinckling of an eye, at the last Trump, we shall be changed*: So to shew the extream suddenness of these mens change from life to death, it is said here, *In a moment*

ב *Ellipsis praepositionis* um:

They shall die.

They? Who? Both great and small, one and another of them shall die, or be swept away by death in a moment. There is a twofold death;

First, Natural; When either sickness or old age dissolves the earthly house of this tabernacle. The natural death of some is very lingring and slow, others are suddenly snatcht away, they die in a moment.

Secondly,

Secondly, There is a violent death; thus many are taken away by the ſword Martial, or Civil, others caſually: The Text is true both of natural and violent death, either of them may overtake us in a moment, yet I conceive the latter is here chiefly intended, *In a moment ſhall they die*; that is, ſome ſudden deſtruction ſhall come upon them, they ſhall be ſurprized by an unlooked for diſaſter, and removed out of the world, while they had not a thought of their removal.

Hence Note.

Firſt, *Death of any ſort, may befal all ſorts of men.*

None can plead exemption or priviledge from the grave. It is appointed to men once to die; moſt die a natural death, and any man may die a violent death; who knows how he ſhall go out of this world? Chriſt told *Peter*, (John 21. 18.) *When thou ſhalt be old, thou ſhalt ſtretch forth thy hands, and another ſhall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldſt not. This ſpake he, ſignifying by what death he ſhould glorifie God.* And what kinde of death was that? The Church Hiſtory aſſureth us, 'twas a violent death. He (as his maſter Jeſus Chriſt) was nailed to a Croſs, and dyed. *We come but one way into the world, but there are a thouſand wayes of going out.*

Note Secondly.

Death comes ſuddenly upon many men, and may upon all men.

The whole life of the longeſt liver in this world, is but a moment, compared to eternity; and there is not any moment of our life, but (with reſpect to ſecond cauſes) we are ſubject to death in it: We alwayes in ſome ſenſe (though at ſome times more) carry our lives in our hand, and how ſoon, or by what hand they may be ſnatcht out of ours, we know not.

Now if our whole life be but a moment, and we ſubject to death every moment, how ſhould we ſtand prepared for death every moment? And how ſad is it to think, that they who may die the next moment, ſhould for dayes, and weeks, and moneths, and years, never prepare for death? Moſt are loth to think of the end of their lives, till they are nearer the end of them; yet no man knoweth how near he is to the end of his life. Many put off the thoughts of death till it cometh, yet none can put off the coming of death; they would remove the meditation of death to the fall of their leaf, to the winter, and worſt of their old age, yet they are not able to remove death one moment from the Spring and beſt of their youth.

Note, Thirdly.

Violent death, by the ſore and ſevere judgement of God, often ſweeps multitudes away in a moment.

God can thruſt whole throngs of men, yea whole Nations into their graves together; it is ſaid (*Numb.* 16. 21.) of *Corah* and his companions, *The earth did cover, or ſwallow them up in a moment:* And the Lord commanded *Moſes, to ſay unto the children of Iſrael* (Exod. 33. 5.) *ye are a ſtiff-necked people; I will come up into the midſt of thee in a moment, and conſume thee:* As if the Lord had ſaid, *I will take no long time for it, I can quickly diſpatch you; how many ſoever there are of you, I will do it in a moment.* We have a like deſcription of the ſudden and quick diſpatch of men at the Lord's word of Command, (*Pſal.* 73. 19.) *How are they brought into deſolation, as in a moment, they are utterly conſumed with terrors?* The final ruine of Babylon was thus propheſied (*Iſa.* 47. 9.) *Theſe two things ſhall come to thee in a moment, in one day, the loſs of children and widdowhood, they ſhall come upon thee in their perfection*; Thou ſhalt utterly be deſtroyed, and periſh at once for ever. The Prophet *Jeremiah* (Lam. 4. 6.) bewayled the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, whoſe calamity was greater then that of *Sodome* and *Gomorrah*, which God deſtroyed in a moment: *Sodome* and *Gomorrah* were great Cities, yet how ſoon conſumed! In ſome ſenſe, there is a greater evil in a lingring deſtruction then in a ſpeedy one; ſo the Prophet aggravates death by famine, beyond death by fire; becauſe to die by famine is a lingring death. *Cæſar* being warned that ſome lay in wait to deſtroy him ſuddenly, ſlighted it, and ſaid, unexpected death is moſt deſireable. And that's the lot of many great men; to which ſome conceive the Pſalmiſt had reſpect, when he ſaid, (*Pſal.* 82. 7.) *Ye ſhall die like men, and fall like one of the Princes*; that is, ſuddenly. But though in ſome ſence a ſpeedy death is more eligible then a lingring one, yet in many reſpects, to die ſuddenly, or in a moment, may be concluded a far greater judgement, then to ſee death coming by degrees, and deſtruction walking towards us ſtep by ſtep. *Solomon*

lomon (Prov. 1. 27.) ſpeaks of *ſwift deſtruction, of deſtruction coming like a whirlwind*; ſwift deſtruction overtakes them who are ſlow paced to receive and obey inſtruction. Thus the Lord can deal both with perſons and with Nations; he needs not make any delays, nor take time to do it, their deſtruction ſhall come (if he will ſend it) in a day, in an hour, yea, *in a moment ſhall they die*,

And the people ſhall be troubled at midnight.

עם Populus conſociatio hominum.

That is, the body, or generality of the people, the *many ſhall be troubled*; they ſhall be as men amazed, or as the Metaphor imports, they ſhall be disjoynted; Men aſſociated under due Laws of Government, are as ſo many members of a well compacted Body; but when broken and ſcattered, they are like a body whoſe members are diſlocated, or out of joynt, unfit for any uſe or ſervice. And as there is a laxation of the members of the body, a disjoynting of the bones, ſo there is a disjoynting of the faculties of the minde; In times of great trouble, not only is the body Politick, which conſiſts of many men, but the minde of every body, or of every ſingle man is much out of joynt. The word is applyed to thoſe great concuſſions of the world (*Pſal.* 18. 17.) *The earth ſhook and trembled, the foundations alſo of the hills were moved, and were ſhaken at the preſence of the Lord, becauſe he was wroth*; which we may interpret of the Princes and Powers of the earth, who are as hills and mountains; if the Lord do but touch them in anger, they move, yea tremble. The word is applyed alſo to the waves of the Sea, (*Jer.* 5. 22.) which *roar, and toſs themſelves*; we commonly ſay, as in the Text, *the Sea is troubled*, or *'tis a troubled Sea*, a toſſing Sea. That expreſſion is alſo common among us, when we ſee a man much diſquieted, *he is* (we ſay) *in a great toſs*; even as a ſhip at Sea upon the proud waves. Thus ſaith *Elihu*, the people ſhall be in a toſs, they ſhall feel a ſtorm in their mindes, ſudden guſts of fear and ſorrow ſhall carry them they know not whither; or they ſhall be lifted up to heaven in vain confidences, and then fall down to hell in deſpairing thoughts, as the tempeſt at Sea is deſcribed in the 107th Pſalm. There is yet another rendring of the Text, in alluſion to Drunkards, who are overcome with wine, (*Jer.* 25. 16.) *And they ſhall drink, and be moved, and be mad*; the word which we tranſlate *move*, is that in the Text; now we know drunkenneſs moves men, and puts all

יגעשו a verbo נעש videtur ſignificare laxationem compagum.

all into diſorder and diſquietment: Thus the people (through the fierce anger of God, and the wine of aſtoniſhment which he gives them to drink) ſhall be moved, they ſhall reel to and fro, and ſtagger like a drunken man. Great troubles and afflictions are called in Scripture the wine of aſtoniſhment, becauſe they make many ſay and do they ſcarce know what; great troubles bereave men not only of their comforts, but of their reaſon; they do not only ſtraiten them, but aſtoniſh them. They who have drowned their wits in cups of worldly pleaſure, may ſoon have them drowned in full and overflowing cups of worldly ſorrow.

Beſides this Expoſition of the peoples being troubled with perplexity, fear, and doubt, with anxiety, and uncertainty of ſpirit what to do, I ſay, beſides this, there is another way of being troubled, upon which ſome Expoſitors ſpecially inſiſt. *The people ſhall be troubled*; that is, ſhall be in a tumult; they ſhall riſe up ſeditiouſly, and (as we ſay) *make a commotion*, they ſhall gather together as many waters, with a roaring noiſe. Many people, are compared to many Waters; and there is ſomtimes a confluence, a great confluence or flood of them tumbling together: The Poet tells us elegantly what rude work a people make when they riſe up like a flood of troubled waters. *Their rage* (ſaith he) *findes out weapons, one throws ſtones, another throws firebrands, till all's in a ſad combuſtion*: Theſe waters, if let alone, may quickly put all into a flame. The Pſalmiſt aſcribes the quieting of the Sea, and the quieting of the people to God in one verſe; yea, I conceive the one is but the explication of the other, (*Pſal.* 65. 7.) *Which ſtilleth the noiſe of the Seas, the noiſe of their waves, and the tumult of their people*. Thus ſaith *Elihu*, the people ſhall be in a tumult, (this ſuits with that expoſition firſt given) ready to deſtroy whomſoever they meet next, or thoſe eſpecially who never did nor meant them any other hurt but to keep the peace, or bridle their headſtrong fury.

Ac veluti magno in populo cum ſæpe coorta eſt Seditio, ſævitque animis ignobile vulgus, Jamque faces & ſaxa volant furor arma miniſtrat. Virg. Æneid. 1.

Yet, I rather adhere to the former Interpretation, *The people ſhall be troubled*, that is, they ſhall be in a great conſternation of ſpirit, neither being able (which they ſeldome are) to adviſe themſelves what to do, nor fit to receive (which they ſeldome will) advice from others. And (as *Elihu* adds) they ſhall be thus troubled

At midnight.

Or, *In the half of the night*, as the words may be rendred;

that's a great aggravation of the judgement. The night is a time of rest, and midnight is the time of deepest rest; so that for the people to be in a tumult, or troubled *at midnight*, is to be overtaken with matter of fear, when fear seemed furthest off, or when they suspected nothing to make them afraid. *David* saith of some, (*Psal.* 3. 5.) *There were they in great fear, where no fear was.* To fear at midnight, is to fear when usually no fear is, that is, when people are at rest in their beds: And so to say, *the people shall be troubled at midnight*, signifieth either, First, the coming of trouble upon a secure people, upon a people who thought themselves, and while they thought themselves not only out of the noise, but reach of danger: Or secondly, It may signifie the coming of trouble upon a people altogether unfit to help themselves; when a man is asleep, he cannot give counsel how to prevent danger, and while he is in his bed, he is in no posture to oppose it. All this may well be included in what *Elihu* saith, *The people shall be troubled at midnight.*

Cum maximè securi.

Hence Note. First,

There are National troubles as well as personal.

God can scare not only a family, or this and that particular man, but a whole people at once; he cannot only make a childe, or a woman, but a multitude, yea an Army of mighty men tremble like a childe, and faint as the weakest woman. A people are many, yet every man shall be as if he were alone, or but one in the midst of innumerable dangers, and of a thousand deaths. *Moses* in his Song foresaw the dread of Nations upon the report of the Lord's miraculous conduct of Israel through the red Sea, (*Exod.* 15. 14, 15, 16.) *The people shall hear, and be afraid; sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestina, all the inhabitants of Canaan shal melt away.* And when Christ speaks of those dreadful Prognosticks of his coming, he not only saith, *There shall be signes in the Sun, and in the Moon, and in the Stars, but upon the Earth distress of Nations, with perplexity,* (Luke 21. 25.)

Secondly, Observe.

Both personal and publick troubles are at the command of God, as both publick and personal peace are.

A people as well as a person, may and shall be troubled, even at

at the midnight of their greatest security, if God give the word. *I make peace* (saith the Lord, *Isa:* 45. 7.) *and create evill*; that is, the evill of trouble. There will be occasion afterward to speak further of this poynt from those words (*v.* 29.) *When he giveth quietness, who can give trouble, and when he hideth his face, who can behold him? Whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only; trouble of all sorts is at the command of God*; if he saith to such or such a mischiefe, goe to a nation, it will goe; if he bid the sword trouble them, if he bid pestilence trouble them, if he bid famine trouble them, if he bid their owne divisions trouble them, *the people shall be troubled*; yea, *they shall be troubled at midnight.*

Whence note, Thirdly.

Trouble takes or seazeth upon many when they least expect it.

God can send trouble when no man thinkes of it. At midnight every one is in bed, all are for rest and quiet. The Lord usually executes his judgements upon the unwary world, upon a secure people (*Exod:* 12. 29.) *At midnight the Lord smote all the first-borne in the land of Egypt*, &c. *And Pharoah rose up in the night, he and all his servants, and all the Egyptians, and there was a great cry in Egypt.* We read also (2 *Kings* 19. 35.) *In that night the Angel of the Lord went out and smote in the campe of the Assyrians, an hundred four-score and five thousand.* It was not a day-battel, but a night-battel; When they were all gone into their tents, and were at rest, when the Army was secure; In that night did the Lord fight them by an Angel, and made a mighty slaughter among them. *Belshazzar* king of the *Chaldeans* was slaine in the night (*Dan:* 5. 30.) even in that night *wherein he made a feast to a thousand of his Lords, and dranke wine before the thousand* (v. 1.) In that night not only of his security, but of his jollity and sensuality, when he had even drowned himselfe and his great Lords with wine and belly-cheare, in that very night the City was broken up, and *Belshazzar* slaine; History tells us what dreadfull work was made upon the *Babylonians* that night. The great Judgement day is so described; Jesus Christ will, at last, trouble the world at midnight; *The Day of the Lord so cometh* (saith the Apostle, 1 *Thes:* 5. 2.) *as a thiefe in the night; when they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them*, &c. Christ him-

himselfe shadowing his coming under the parable of the ten Virgins, who all slumbred and slept, tells us (*Math:* 25. 6.) *At midnight there was a cry made, Behold the Bridegroome cometh, goe ye out to meete him.* Though some were in a better condition then others, some wise, some foolish, yet all slept, and it was a kind of midnight to them all. Christ will come, and the people shall be troubled at midnight, and then there will be a dreadfull Cry among the secure drowsie world. Therefore the Counsell of Christ is most proper (*Math:* 13. 35.) *Watch, because ye know not at what houre your Master may come, whether at even, or at midnight, or at Cock-crowing, or in the morning.* It is hard to be put to it at midnight, 'tis sad to be in a sleepy or slumbring condition when evill comes. The Gospel sheweth us, how much that man was troubled, when his neighbour came to borrow bread of him at midnight (*Luke* 11. 5. 7.) *Trouble me not, my children are with me in bed, I cannot rise and give thee.* If it be matter of trouble to be called out of our bed to doe a courtesie for a friend at midnight, O what will it be to be called up to Judgement, or to be surprized with any Judgement at midnight! Therefore prepare and be ready for all changes. *At midnight the people shall be troubled,*

And passe away.

These words are a third part of the description of the Judgement of God upon a people; *they shall die, they shall be troubled, they shall passe away*; that is, some of them shall die, all shall be troubled, others *shall passe away*. There is a three-fold notion of *passing away*.

First, Some expound it thus, They shall be carried captive out of their own Country; This with the former two make up a perfect Judgement upon any people; Some shall die, or be slaine, all shall be troubled and vext, they shall be at their wits end, and the rest shall be carried away captive.

Secondly, *They shall pass away*; that is, they shall pass into their graves; the forme of speech here used may well beare that sense, for death is a passing away, a passing out of this world (*Psal:* 37. 36.) *Loe he passed away and was gone*, that is, he died; And that which is as death to the heavens and the earth (their great change when ever it shall be) is called *a passing away* (Math: 5. 18.) *Till heaven and earth passe away, one iot or one tittle shall in*

Transire intelligo, non pro migrare alibi, sed pro abire in sepulchrum. Merc:

no wise passe away from the Law till all be fullfilled; that is, the Law shall stand in force as long as the world stands. Thus to passe away is to die. But I conceive, we are to expound this third branch of the Judgement distinctly from the former two, and therefore for as much as we have death in the first words, it will not be proper to take in death here againe, or to expound *passing away* by dying. The third notion, of, *they shall passe away*, is, they shall run or flee for it, they know not whether, they shall flee for their lives from the danger impending over them. As some shall die, and all be troubled, so not a few shall endeavour to save their lives by flight. Christ in the Gospel foretold the great troubles and afflictions which should come upon *Jerusalem*, and in them there was a sad concurrence or meeting of these three Judgments in the text. For when after forty yeares the *Romans* invaded and ruin'd their City, many dyed & were destroyed by sword and famine, all the people were troubled; Oh in what a hurry were they to see the *Romane Eagle* displayed before their Gates! and then they *passed away*; that is, as many as could, withdrew and got out of the danger. It is reported in history, that before the Seidge of that City, a voyce was heard in *Jerusalem*, saying, (*Migremus hinc*) *let us passe from hence*, they who believed that warning, departed soone after; And as some passed away before the Judgement came, so when it was come, many were striving to be gone, or to passe away. Therefore Christ admonished them (*Math:* 24. 20.) *Pray that your flight be not in the winter, nor on the Sabath day.* I conceive, we are to understand this text distinctly of such a passing away. *In a moment shall they die, and the people shall be troubled at midnight, and passe away*; they shall doe what they can to secure themselves by out-running the danger.

Note from it, First.

God hath variety of meanes to humble a sinfull people.

Into how many wayes doe the Judgements of God divide themselves; severall persons beare severall parts; here is death to many, trouble to all, flight to some. That, in the Prophet, answers it fully (*Jer:* 15. 1.) where the Lord protesting that nothing (no not the intercession of *Moses* and *Samuel*) should take him off from his resolve against that people, saith, *Such as are for death to death, and such as are for the sword to the sword, and such as are for the famine to the famine, and such as are for the captivity*

to the captivity. There's peſtilence, and ſword, and famine and captivity ready at the call of God to take away a provoking people.

Secondly, Note.

To paſſe away, or to be put to our flight, is a grievous Judgement.

To flee from the face of the purſuer, to run for our lives, who knows the trouble and terror of it, but they that have been in it? what a mercy is it that our dwellings are continued to us? that we abide in our places, that we neither die in a moment, are not ſurpriz'd by midnight-feares, but reſt quietly in our beds, though feares at midnight have been ready to ſurprize us. What a mercy is it, that we are not paſſing away, running, fleeing into the wilderneſſe, as the poore Churches of God have done in ſeverall ages?

So much of Judgement upon the people in that three-fold notion of it. We have here alſo Judgement upon Princes.

And the mighty ſhall be taken away without hand.

Not only *the many*, but *the mighty* ſhall feele the Judgements of God; For as 'tis ſayd in the former verſe, *He accepteth not the perſons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more then the poore*; The mighty and the meaneſt of men are alike to God, when they are alike in ſinning againſt God: If they doe evill alike, they ſhall ſuffer evill alike; God accepteth no mans perſon.

The mighty ſhall be taken away.

אבירי *fortis robuſtus excellens fortitudine; pluraliter* Abirim *in genere forte ſignificat.*

The word rendred, *mighty*, taken plurally, is uſed in Scripture to denote not only mighty men, but any creature that excells in might. And therefore according to the exigence of the place, it ſignifies ſometimes Angells, who being ſpirits, exceed all fleſh in might. The people of *Iſrael* in the wilderneſs did *eat Angells food* (Pſal: 78. 5.) the food of the *Abirims*, of the *mighty or ſtrong ones*: And as it is applyed to Angells who exceed the ſtrongeſt men in ſtrength, ſo it is applyed to any ſort of ſtrong beaſts, to the horſe (*Jer:* 47. 3.) to Bulls, (*Iſa:* 34. 7. *Jer:* 50. 11. *Pſal:* 22. 13. *Pſal:* 68. 31.) Thus the word riſeth above man to Angells, and falls below man to the beaſts of the earth; here

here 'tis applyable only to ſtrong and mighty men, of whom yet there are three ſorts.

Firſt, Some are men of a mighty arme.

Secondly, Others are mighty in Armes.

Thirdly, There are men mighty in Authority.

The firſt of theſe is a natural mighty man, he hath a mighty arme, a ſtrong body, or he excells in bodily ſtrength. The ſecond is a marſhall mighty man, a ſouldier, a man of warre. The third is the Magiſtratical mighty man, he is cloathed with power both to puniſh and reward: Poſſibly he may have no bodily might, yea, poſſibly he is no ſouldier, yet a man of ſuch power he is, that he commands whole Nations. Now take the word *Mighty* in any of theſe three ſenſes, and it is a truth, *the mighty ſhall be taken away*, the mighty in ſtrength of the Arme, the mighty in ſtrength of Armyes, the mighty in power and dignity, are by the hand of the Almighty God

taken away.

וישרו אביר *et amovent potentem, impersonaliter.*

They ſhall take them away (ſaith the Hebrew text) that is, ſay ſome (according to the firſt tranſlation mentioned) *the people* ſhall violently take away the mighty. But by an uſuall Hebraiſme we may read it Impersonally, *the mighty ſhall be taken away*, conceaſing or leaving it to be underſtood by whom. Like that ſpeech to the rich man (*Luke* 12. 25.) *This night doe they require thy ſoule of thee*, (ſo we put in the Margin) that is, (as the text hath it) *this night* thy ſoule *ſhall* be required of thee, they ſhall take thy ſoule, that is, it ſhall be taken away; ſo here they ſhall take away the mighty, that is, the mighty ſhall be taken away or removed. We may take notice of a two-fold *remove* or taking away.

Firſt, There is a remove out of place and power; Thus a man is taken away when his authority is taken away.

Secondly, There is a removing or taking of a man out of the world; Thus they are taken away whoſe perſons are deſtroyed, cut off, and periſh. The mighty, both wayes or either way are often *taken away*. The perſons of many mighty men have fallen, and many more of them have fallen from their places and powers. Here they are under a generall threatning, *They ſhall be taken away*. But how ſhall they be taken away? the text anſwers

without hand.

It is somewhat strange that they who are mighty, and have such power in their hand, should be taken away, and no hand touch them, or *without hand*. We use to say of a thing strangely gone, or gone we know not how, *It cannot be gone without hands*; yet thus the Lord deales judicially with the mighty of the world; They shall be taken away *without hand*. There may be a threefold understanding of that expression.

First, Thus; *The mighty shall be taken away without hand*; that is, they shall have no hands to help them, or they shall be destitute of all humane helpe. Sometimes God leaves or strips the mighty naked, they who have had great power, and many thousands standing up to defend them, have not a hand for them, and so are taken away without hand, no man drawing a sword or striking a stroake for them.

Frequenter thanatus pro ministerio, sed frequentissime pro ope et auxilio ponitur, Pin:.

Secondly, To doe a thing *without hand*, is to doe it with the smallest appearance of second causes or instruments. We are ready to say, there must be a great deale of tugging to get the mighty downe, who like Oakes are strongly rooted and highly growne, who looke like mountaines, which cannot be removed, yet (saith *Elihu*) the Lord can take them away *without hand*; that is, *easily*, without any trouble at all, little meanes or very improbable meanes being used to effect it. So then to doe a thing without hand, is to doe it as if we put no hand no stresse to it when we doe it. As they who move swiftly or lightly are sayd to goe without setting a foot on the ground (*Dan:* 8. 5.) the *He-Goate* came and touched not the ground, he did rather fly then goe. So to doe a thing, as if we did not put a hand to it, is to doe it with the greatest ease imaginable.

Absq; manu armatorum. Aquin:

Thirdly, To doe a thing without hand, is to doe it without any visible meanes at all, even by the immediate stroake or power of God. There is a hand of God in all things that are done in the world, but some things are done without any other hand, and are therefore most properly sayd to be done without hand. Thus the Lord is able to doe the greatest things, even to take mighty men from the earth, no hand of man appearing or joyning with him in the action. Now, because God usually sets instruments a worke to effect his will in the world, and to bring about his counsels, therefore in what work soever he either quite leaves or seemes to leave instruments out, that work is sayd to be done without hand. The

Nutu tantum dei. Merc:

stone

stone which shall grow up to be a great mountaine, that is, the kingdome of Christ, is called *a stone cut out without hands* (Dan: 2. 34.) that is, without humane power. The kingdome of Christ shall be set up so much by the power of God without any earthly contribution, that it shall confessedly be sayd to be set up without hands. Though we ought not to neglect the coming and advancement of the kingdome of Christ in the world, yet we should not be anxiously carefull about it, when we see little or no meanes for it, yea though we see great very great meanes set against it, because *a stone cut out without hands* shall doe it.

The Apostle useth this forme of speaking, both as to eternalls and spiritualls. Concerning the former he is expresse (2 *Cor:* 5. 1.) *We know that when the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternall in the heavens*; that is, a house of Gods own immediate making, a house to the making whereof man hath added nothing. The fabrick of this visible world is a house made without hands, much more is heaven, and the glorious unseene state which Saints shall have hereafter. The house above, or state of Glory is wholly of Gods making. And as our eternall estate is expressed by a house made without hands, so our spirituall estate is called by the same Apostle, *A work done without hands* (Col: 2. 11.) where having asserted our compleatness in Christ (*v.* 10.) he adds, *In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands.* The external literal circumcision was made with hands; there was an operation of man in it, the cutting off the foreskin of the flesh, but in the spiritual circumcision, man hath no hand, it is the work of God alone; as also that effectual faith is which always accompanieth it, and is therefore called (*v.* 12.) *the faith of the operation of God.* There is a temporary faith which we may call a faith of the operation of man, but true saving faith is the operation of God, and may be sayd as the spirituall circumcision (which was signified and shadowed by the corporall) to be *made without hands.*

Now as the Scripture speakes both of spiritualls and eternalls which are made without hands, so this text speakes of externalls and providentialls in the same language, *The mighty shall be taken away without hand*, that is, without any creature-helpe or visible humane hand; what ever is done without a visible hand, is done by the hand of God. *Elihu* intimates a punishment upon the

Indicatur divinum supplicium, cujus nulla humana causa assignari, aut quod nulla humana vi declinari possit.

mighty, which (as to the effecting of it) cannot be aſſigned to any thing in man, much leſſe can the effecting of it, be hindred by man. The hand of God is moſt viſible, in doing that which no viſible hand hath done, or can undoe. *They ſhall be taken away without hand.*

Hence note.

The mightieſt have no might againſt God.

That cannot be avoyded by any humane power, which is done without humane power. God ſlew the firſt-borne of *Egypt*, and deſtroyed the *Aſſyrian* hoaſt without hand, he did it by his Angel, no hand appearing againſt them. The Lord ſmote *Herod*, and he died without hand (*Acts* 12. 23.) *Immediately* (that is, preſently, as the Greeke word imports, 'tis true alſo, immediately, that is, without humane meanes, as our *Engliſh* word alſo imports) *the Angel of the Lord ſmote him, and he was eaten of wormes, and gave up the Ghoſt.* What a poore worme was that mighty man in the hand of God, when God ſlew him without hand, and commanded the wormes to eate him? Jeſus Chriſt, who is alſo the *mighty God* (Iſa: 9. 6.) called himſelfe *a worme and no man*, in his humiliations for the redemption of loſt man (*Pſal:* 22. 6.) What are the mightieſt men but wormes to God, who is ſo mighty, that if he ſay the word, wormes become their Maſters. The mighty Giants are before God but pigmy's, punyes, or children. The Prophet gives a good warning (*Jer:* 9. 23.) *Let not the mighty man glory in his might.* Let him not glory in the might of his arme, Let him not glory in the might of his armes or Armies, though man have an Army of mighty men about him, yet let him not glory in them, no nor in the might of his power or authority. If any man uſeth his might againſt God, what is his might unto God? (*Pſal:* 58. 1.) *Why boaſteſt thou O mighty man, that thou canſt doe miſchiefe?* If a man be mighty, and have a mind to doe miſchiefe with his might, eſpecially if he boaſteth in his might, becauſe he can doe miſchiefe with it, he is not only ſinfull, but weake and fooliſh. There is no greater morall weakneſs then to boaſt either of naturall, martiall, or civill ſtrength. Could any of the mighty men of this world ſtand before the might of God, they had ſomewhat to boaſt of. Read the word of the Lord againſt the mighty (*Iſa:* 2. 10.) Behold the Kings and Captaines of the earth

earth trembling before the preſence of the Lambe (*Rev:* 6. 15.) and then judge how weake the ſtrongeſt are before the Lord? All ages are full of teaching examples, that there is no might to his who is Almighty.

Secondly, Note.

What ever God will doe he can eaſily doe it.

He can effect it with a looke, with a caſt of his eye, he can doe it with a breath of his mouth, he can doe it with a word. It is ſaid (*Exod:* 14. 24.) *God looked unto the hoſt of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and through the cloud, and troubled the hoſt of the Egyptians, and tooke off their Chariot wheeles, that they drave them heavily.* To looke upon them was an eaſie thing, God did not give them a ſtroake with his hand, but only a looke with his eye, and that overthrew them.

Thirdly, Note.

God can do the greateſt things alone.

He can ſubdue the mighty, though none come forth to his help againſt the mighty; they are curſed who do not help the Lord againſt the mighty, when they ſet their might againſt the Lord; (*Judg.* 5. 23.) *Curſe ye Meroz*, (ſaith the angel of the Lord,) *curſe ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, becauſe they came not forth to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord againſt the mighty.* But though it be the ſin of man not to help the Lord againſt the mighty, yet the withdrawing of their help doth not hinder the Lord in his purpoſe againſt the mighty: For, *He taketh away the mighty without hands.* Though men ſtir not, though angels ſhould not ſtir to his help, yet his own arm can bring either ſalvation or deſtruction. It is ſaid of the Lord (*Iſa.* 44. 24.) *He ſtretched out the heavens alone*; there was none to help him to unfold that vaſt canopy of heaven, he ſtretcht out the heavens alone. As in the Creation *he made all alone*, ſo in Providence he can act and effect all alone. *It is a great glory to God, that he hath many inſtruments to help him, many tongues to ſpeak for him, many hands to work for him; but it is a greater glory to God that he needs none to help him, none to ſpeak or work for him.* In this the glory of the Lord infinitely outſhines the glory of all the mighty Kings and Princes of the earth. They have done, and can do mighty things, but not with-

without hands, and therefore they have the hands of thousands at command for them; 'tis not their place to put their hand to the work, 'tis enough that they give commands and orders, 'tis the duty of others to execute all their righteous commands, and fulfil their orders. But the Lord hath not only a commanding power, but an executing power too in himself; though no hand move, yet his affairs stand not still. God, and all creatures put together, are no more then God alone without any creature: Many are useful, but none are necessary unto God. Take two inferences from it.

First, This is matter of terror to wicked men; though they see no hand in the world against them, much less any able to match them, least of all to check them, yea though they see all hands for them, yet this is no security to them, this is no assurance of one hours safety, seeing the Lord taketh away the mighty without hand, and he usually doth it when they see not which way any hand can reach them. It is the conclusion of one of the Ancients upon this place in reference to a mighty oppressour; *He is invisibly pull'd down, who did visibly pull down; He ruined others with hands, but himself shall be ruin'd without hand; he saw him whom he took away, but he shall not see him who takes him away.* Let them who live without fear of any hand, remember the Apostles admonition, (*Heb.* 10. 31.) *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hand of the living God, who takes away the mighty without hand.*

Invisibiliter rapitur, qui visibiliter rapiebat, Gregor.

Secondly, This is matter of wonderful comfort, to all that fear God, and trust upon him, whether Princes or people, whether mighty men or mean men. What though ye see no hand for you; yet 'tis enough if he be for you who saves you without hand. The protecting and saving power of God, is as great and as effectual as his destroying power is; yea, he oftner saves without hand, then he destroyes without hand. As the Kings of the earth, so the great King of heaven and earth, loves to deal his favours, and bestow his rewards immediately with his own hand, but usually afflicts and punisheth by the hands of others. That's a most pregnant Scripture to this purpose, (*Hos.* 1. 7.) where the Lord promiseth *to save Judah*; But Judah might say, I am in a very low condition, and no help appears: Therefore he addeth, *I will save them by the Lord their God; and will not save them by Bowe, nor by Sword, nor by Battel, nor by Horses, nor Horsemen.* Judah shall be

be saved, though there be no hand to save them. *I will save them* (saith the Lord) *by the Lord their God.* I will do it immediately. And the Lord doth not only say (in the affirmative) he will save them without hand; but he saith also (in the Negative) that he will not save them with hands, *But I will not save them by Bowe, nor Sword, nor Battel, nor Horses, nor Horsemen*; there shall be no appearance of these helps, I have heretofore destroyed you by Sword, and Bowe, by Horses, and Horsemen, but I will have all the honour and thanks of your salvation to my self. Though the Lords people have neither horses nor horsemen, though they are as helples as is imaginable, yet the Lord is able to save them, & he wil do it in the fittest season. As this is true in reference to Princes and Nations in their publique capacity, so private Christians may take up the comfort of it. What though great distress and affliction be nigh, and no hand to save you, yet the Lord can save without hand; if you are low, he can raise you, though none lend a hand to raise you; if poor, he can enrich you; if weak, he can strengthen you, though you have no means for either: It is an everlasting spring of comfort, that the Lord can do all things without hand, that he needs not be beholding to the creature, nor stands in need of their help to effect either threatned judgments against Babylon, or his promised mercies unto Sion.

Thus we have seen *Elihu* describing the righteous, though severe dealings of God, both with people and Princes, who despise his counsels, and provoke his wrath: The reason why they fall under his wrath, is further discovered in the next words.

JOB,

JOB. Chap. 34. Verſ. 21, 22.

For his eyes are upon the wayes of man, and he ſeeth all his goings.
There is no darkneſs nor ſhadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themſelves.

IN the former verſe *Elihu* reported the judgement of God both upon the people and upon the Princes of the earth, *In a moment ſhall they die*, &c. In theſe two verſes, he gives us a proof that the Lord is righteous in judgement both upon Princes and people, or he aſſignes the ground of it. That the words are a reaſon of the former, the Cauſal Particle in the beginning of the 21th verſe puts it out of queſtion.

Verſ. 21. *For his eyes are upon the wayes of men.*

As if he had ſaid, God doth not theſe things, he troubles not Nations, and Nobles, People, or Princes, by an abſolute and ſoveraigne power, or becauſe he will, but he finds juſt cauſe to do it; *What men do, is enough to juſtifie God in what they ſuffer*: He hath alwayes power enough in his hand to deſtroy all men, and to turn this world back into its firſt nothing, but he never uſeth his power, nor puts it forth without cauſe.

For his eyes are upon the wayes of man, &c.

God is a Spirit, the ſimplicity of his Eſſence is his firſt and higheſt perfection, he is purely incorporeal; yet as the paſſions of man's minde, ſo the members of his body are often in Scripture attributed unto God; we read of the *face of God*, of the *hand of God*, of the *ear of God*, and as in many other places, ſo in this, of the *eyes of God*: Now as the ear of God notes only his power of hearing, and the hand of God his power of working, ſo the eye or eyes of God note only his power of ſeeing, knowing and diſcerning the wayes of men. And when *Elihu* ſaith, *his eyes are upon the wayes of man*, his meaning is only this, he clearly diſcerns and underſtands the wayes of man.

Theſe words, *his eyes are upon the wayes of man*, intimate, Firſt,

Firſt, A preſent act, he doth not ſay, they were, or they will be upon the wayes of man, but *they are*. Secondly, They imply as a preſent, ſo a continued act; his eyes are ſo upon the wayes of man, that they are never off them. The eyes of God dwell, as it were, upon the wayes of man: His eyes are ſaid indeed *to run to and fro through the whole earth*, (2 Chron. 16. 8.) yet they do not wander from one object to another, but are fixed and ſetled upon every one. Thirdly, they imply an intentive act, or the ſeriouſneſs of the heart of God upon the wayes of man. We may behold a thing, and yet take no great notice of it; but when our eyes are ſaid to be upon any thing, this imports they are buſied much upon it. Fourthly, This manner of ſpeaking ſignifieth not only a clear ſight, but that which is operative, carrying with it a moſt exact ſcrutiny or diſquiſition of the wayes of men, according to that expreſſion of the Pſalmiſt, (*Pſal.* 11. 4.) *His eyes behold, his eye-lids try the children of men*. God doth not only behold, but his eye-lids try the wayes of men; that is, he ſo looks upon them, that he looks through them, and diſcerneth what they are to the utmoſt. God doth not only behold the body and bulk of our actions, but the ſoul and ſpirit of them, and while he ſeeth them, he ſeeth into them. All this, and much more then we can apprehend, is comprehended in theſe words, *His eyes are upon*

The wayes of man.

The word is plural, not *way*, but *wayes*; which ſhews the extenſiveneſs of the ſight or knowledge of God: The word being put indefinitely, is to be taken univerſally: His eyes are not confined to this or that object, to this or that place, to this or that perſon, but his eyes look over all, *His eyes are upon the wayes of man*.

Yet further, *the wayes of men* may be diſtinguiſhed; Firſt, As they are either internal or external. The internal wayes of man, are the wayes of his heart, as the Prophet hath it, (*Iſa.* 57. 17.) *He went on frowardly in the way of his heart*. And theſe wayes of the heart, our inward wayes are, firſt, our thoughes, what we imagine and conceive; ſecondly, our affections, what we love, and what we hate, what we rejoyce in, and what we mourn for, declare the way of our hearts. Thirdly, The wayes of the heart are a man's purpoſes, reſolutions, and intentions what to do. Fourthly,

The wayes of the heart are man's designes, or his aims, what he drives at, or proposeth as his end in all that he doth. In this latitude we are to understand the present Text; when *Elihu* saith, *the eyes of God are upon the wayes of man*, remember they are upon his thoughts, upon his affections, upon his purposes, upon his designes and aimes, all these are before the Lord; as it is said of Christ, (*John* 2. 25.) *He needed not that any should testifie of man; for he knew what was in man*; that is, both the state of his heart, and all the movings of it. And if the Lord's eyes be upon the internal wayes of man, then certainly they are upon the external wayes of man; if he knoweth what work the heart is at or about, certainly he knoweth what the hand is at or about. He that knoweth which way the minde goeth, cannot but know which way the foot goeth. His eyes are upon the external wayes of man, but 'tis his chief glory that his eyes are upon the internal wayes of man, (*Gen.* 6. 5.) *The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great upon the earth*: He saw man's actions or outward wayes were very wicked, but besides that, saith the Text, He saw, *that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually*. He saw the wayes within, what was formed up, or (as the word there notes) what creatures were made and fashioned in the minde of man. Thus, if we take the wayes in that distinction of internal and external, the eyes of God are upon them.

Secondly, Take the wayes of man as differenced in their kinds, as they are either good or evil; the eyes of the Lord are upon both. *They are* (saith *Solomon*, Prov. 15. 3.) *in every place, beholding the evil and the good*: that is, the evil wayes and the good wayes of men. But saith not the Prophet (*Habbak.* 1. 14.) *Thou art of purer eyes then to behold evil*? Which may seem, at first reading, to imply, that God doth not behold the evil wayes or actings of men. I answer, if we distinguish the word *behold*, we shall soon reconcile these Scriptures. To *behold*, is either to discerne what is before us, or to *behold*, is to approve what is before us. There is a seeing of knowledge, and there is a seeing of contentment; now when the Prophet saith, *the Lord is of purer eyes then to behold evil*, his meaning is, he doth not, he cannot behold evil with contentment or approbation, otherwise the Lord beholds evil, even all the evil in the world; *both good and evil are before him, who is himself only and altogether good. His eyes are upon the ways of*

Man. אישׁ

Not only upon the wayes of this or that man, but of every man; let man be what he will for a man, let him be a great man, or a mean man, let him be a rich man or a poor man, let him be a wise man or a fool, let him be an ignorant or a knowing man, let him be a holy or a prophane man, let him be a subtle or a simple man, his eyes are upon him. Those things which difference men among themselves, make no difference at all among them, as to the eye of God. *His eyes are upon the wayes of* (whomsoever you can call) *man.*

And he seeth all his goings.

This latter clause of the verse is of the same sence with the former, therefore I shall not stay upon the opening of it. The Scripture often useth Synonoma's, and repeats the same thing in other terms, to shew the truth and certainty of it; and surely the Spirit gives a double stroke here, to strike this truth home into our hearts, and fasten it in our mindes, *He beholdeth the wayes, and he seeth all the goings of man.* The word translated *seeing*, signifieth a very curious or critical sight, as was opened before. ראה

Again, these latter words say, *he seeth*

All his goings.

Where we have the universal particle expresst, which was only understood in the forme. And though these two words, *wayes* and *goings* may be expounded for the same thing, yet in this conjunction we may distinguish them, by understanding the word *wayes*, for the constant course of a man's life, and the word *goings*, for his particular and renewed motions in those wayes. The Original word rendred *goings*, signifies sometimes *going with much caution*, yea with a kinde of state or pomp, yet frequently any ordinary going. צעד *incedere cum pompa, proprie deambulare.*

Now, when *Elihu* asserts, *The Lord seeth all his goings*; we may sum up the matter under these five considerations; He seeth First, Where he goeth, what his path is. Secondly, He seeth whether he is going, what he makes the end of his journey or travel. Thirdly, when he goeth, or sets out, what time he takes for every undertaking. Fourthly, how far he goeth, the Lord takes notice of every step, what progress he makes in any business

good or bad. Fifthly, he ſeeth in what manner he goeth, with what heart, with what mind, or frame of ſoule he goeth. Thus diſtinct and exact is the Lord in *beholding the wayes, and in ſeeing all the goings of man.*

Hence note, First.

Surely the Lord is a God of knowledge.

If we could conceive a man to have his eyes in all places, and upon all perſons, an eye upon all hearts, and an eye in all hearts, as well as an eye upon all hands, you would ſay this man muſt needs be a knowing man, eſpecially if he have ſuch an eye, as the eye of God is, a diſcerning eye, a diſtinguiſhing eye, a trying eye, an eye which ſeeth to the bottome of whatſoever it ſeeth. *Hannah* ſayd this in her ſong (1 *Sam.* 2.3.) *Speak not ſo proudly, let not arrogancy come out of your lips; for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.* 'Tis not a ſlight ſuperficial knowledge which God hath of things or perſons, *by him actions are weighed*, and ſo are the Actors. God puts all into an even ballance, and he will weigh both perſons and actions to a graine, yea every word and thought ſhall goe into the ballance. It was ſaid to that great Monarch *Belteſhazer*, by a hand-writing upon the wall, *Thou art weighed in the ballances.* The Lord weighed that great King, he weighed all his power, and the exerciſe of it; and he that weigheth Kings, will not leave the meaneſt ſubject unweighed; *by him actions are weighed.* We many times paſſe over our actions without conſideration, and never take the weight of them, at leaſt, we never weigh them in the Sanctuary ballance. If they will beare weight in the ballance of the world, we preſume they will in Gods ballance alſo. But as the Lord is a God of knowledge otherwiſe then man is, ſo by him actions are weighed otherwiſe then by man. It is ſaid of Idolls (*Pſal:* 115. 15.) *They have eyes and ſee not*; but we may ſay of the Lord Jehovah the true God, the living God, he hath properly, no eyes, yet he ſeeth; and his faculty of ſeeing is infinitely above that which himſelfe hath planted in man. The Atheiſt while he is about the worſt work in the world, the breaking in pieces of the people of God, and afflicting his heritage, while he is ſlaying the widow, and the ſtranger, and murdering the fatherleſſe, while he is (I ſay) at ſuch kind of worke as this, he ſaith (*Pſal:* 94. 7.) *The Lord ſhall not ſee, neither ſhall the God of*

of Jacob regard it. But what ſaith the Pſalmiſt to him and ſuch as he (*v.* 8, 9.) *Underſtand ye brutiſh among the people, he that formed the eye, ſhall not he ſee?* Thoſe words of the Prophet to King *Aſa* (2 Chron: 16. 9.) *The eyes of the Lord run to and fro through the whole earth*, are an alluſion to a man who having a deſire to know much, or to ſee all in the world, runs up and down, travels from place to place, from Country to Country for information. The Lord would have us know that he knoweth every thing as exactly, as they who run from place to place to ſee what's done in every place. It is prophecyed of the latter times (*Dan:* 12.4.) *Many ſhall run too and fro, and knowledge ſhall be increaſed*; that is, many ſhall be ſo graciouſly greedy of knowledge, that they will refuſe no labour nor travel to attaine it. *They will run too and fro*, to inquire and ſearch for it, they will not thinke any time or labour loſt, if they may but gaine that precious commodity by it, called true knowledge, or the knowledge of the truth. And that expreſſion of *running too and fro*, may wel be expounded, they ſhall by diſcourſe and arguing beate out the truth; In diſcourſing the mind runs too and fro faſter then the feete can in travelling; In diſcourſe we run from poynt to poynt, from reaſon to reaſon, from objection to objection, from queſtion to queſtion, till we come to ſolid anſwers and concluſions, and ſo knowledge is increaſed. The Lord is ſurely a God of knowledge, whoſe *eyes run too and fro* without motion, and ſee the bottome of all things, without diſcourſe or argumentation.

Secondly, Note.

The Lords knowledge of man never abateth, he is alwayes obſerving and alike obſerving what men doe and what men are.

The beſt the moſt waking men, have their ſlumbrings and ſleepings; but the Lord neither ſlumbreth nor ſleepeth, *his eyes are upon the wayes of man.* And when the Scripture ſaith, *The Lord doth neither ſlumber nor ſleepe*, we may underſtand it in a twofold reference. First, as to the protection of his people (*Pſal:* 121.4.) *Behold he that keepeth Iſrael, ſhall neither ſlumber nor ſleep*; that is, he watcheth over them ſo unceſſantly, ſo unweariedly, that no danger can approach them without his knowledge. Secondly, he never ſlumbereth nor ſleepeth as to the obſervation and conſideration of all people, he never takes his eye off from the wayes of man.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Note

The Lords knowledge or ſight of mans wayes, is univerſall and everlaſting.

The All-ſeeing God ſeeth all our wayes, and he ſeeth them alwayes. And he ſeeth them all alwayes by one act. The Lords view or proſpect of things is not ſucceſſive one after another, but conjunctive, all at once. The Lord hath a large eye, and an everlaſting eye, yea is all eye. He knows all things; Firſt, paſt or that have been; Secondly, preſent or that are; Thirdly, future, poſſible or that ſhall be. Thus ſaith the Lord in the Prophet (*Iſa:* 46.10.) *I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done.* And upon this read the Lords challenge of all the Idolls in the world (*Iſa:* 41. 21, 22, 23.) *Let them ſhew the former things what they be, that we may conſider them and know the latter end of them, or declare us things to come; Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods.* As if the Lord had ſayd, if ye can tell us all that's paſt, or any thing that is to come, as I can, then ye may take the honour of God, otherwiſe ye are but lyes and vanities. Againe the Lord knows all things; Firſt, without diſtraction; and ſecondly, he knows all things with cleareſt diſtinction; it is no more trouble to the Lord to ſee all things then to ſee one, and he ſeeth all things as if he had but one thing to ſee.

From the conſideration of this knowledge of God, let me give foure or five inferences for inſtruction.

Firſt, (which is moſt naturall to the text) if, *the Lords eyes be upon the wayes of man, if he ſeeth all his goings, then all the Lords Judgements are right.*

The Judges of this world, may have a principle of righteouſneſſe in them, and we may call them juſt and righteous Judges, yet all their Judgements are not alwayes right. For, as ſome men are ſo ignorant, that they know nothing at all, ſo there are none ſo knowing as to know all things; the cleareſt ſighted Judges doe not ſee all that may concerne them in giving Judgement; even among them ſome may be blinde, and many blinded, ſome are blinde and cannot ſee much, others are blinded and will not ſee all

all that they ſee, they are blinded poſſibly with bribes and gifts, with hopes or feares, with paſſions and prejudices. And how cleare-ſighted and honeſt-hearted ſoever any are, yet they cannot ſee all, ſomewhat may lye out of their ſight. Hence it cometh to paſſe, that a juſt Judge may doe that which is unjuſt, he cannot ſee quite through every matter, though he ſet himſelfe to ſearch the matter before he giveth Judgement. But as the Lord is all righteouſneſſe in his principle, and beares an everlaſting love to righteouſneſſe; ſo he hath a cleare ſight of all things and perſons, and therefore he muſt needs give a righteous Judgement concerning all things, actions, and perſons; Though he overthrow nations he is righteous, though he overthrow Princes he is righteous, becauſe he ſeeth into all things, and proceedeth upon certain knowledge of every mans caſe and condition. He cannot erre in Judgement, who hath no error in his Judgement, nor any deviation in his will.

Secondly, If *the Lords eyes are upon all the wayes of men*, then, *certainly ſinners, whoſe wayes are evill, ſhall never goe unpuniſhed.*

For if he have a principle of righteouſneſſe in him, and an eye to ſee all their unrighteous wayes, they cannot eſcape his juſtice; Say to the wicked, *woe to him, for he ſhall eate the fruit of his doings* (Iſa: 3. 11.) The righteous God knoweth the unrighteouſneſſe of man, and therefore woe to the unrighteous man.

Thirdly, Take this concluſion, Then *no godly man, no good man ſhall goe unrewarded, or looſe the reward of that good which he hath done.*

The Lord is righteous, and he ſeeth every one that doth right, or the righteouſneſſe of every mans way; and it is his promiſe to reward the righteous, therefore they ſhall be rewarded. This is matter of ſtrong conſolation, and great encouragement to all that are righteous; If the Lord ſeeth all they doe, nothing which they have well done ſhall be loſt in the dark, or lie in the duſt. *God will bring forth their righteouſneſſe as the light, and their juſt dealing as the noone day.* And as the knowledge which God hath of their wayes, aſſureth the righteous that they ſhall be rewarded for, ſo that they ſhall be aſſiſted and protected in their doing

righte-

righteouſneſſe. The Prophet makes that inference in the place before-cited (2 *Chron:* 16. 9.) *The eyes of the Lord run too and fro through the earth* (what followeth?) *to ſhew himſelfe ſtrong in the behalfe of them*, or (as we put in the Margin) *ſtrongly to hold with them whoſe heart is perfect towards him.* The Lord is alwayes ſtrong, and alike in ſtrength, his hand is not ſhortned at any time, that he cannot ſave, yet he doth not alwayes ſhew his ſtrength; but as he is ſtrong, ſo he will ſhew himſelfe ſtrong for the perfect or upright in heart; that is, he will act his ſtrength to the utmoſt for the ſafety and aſſiſtance of thoſe whoſe hearts are perfect with him. So then, as they that are good, and doe good, ſhall be rewarded for the good they have done, ſo they ſhall be protected in the dangers and evills they incurre while they are doing good. Another Prophet ſpeakes both theſe inferences from this principle of the knowledge or ſight of God (*Jer:* 32. 19.) *He is great in counſell, and he is mighty in working, for his eyes are upon all the wayes of the ſons of men, to give to every one according to his wayes, and according to the fruit of his doings.*

Fourthly, If the eyes of the Lord are upon all the wayes of the Children of men, *then the Lord will call all men to an account for their wayes.*

Why doth he take notice of their wayes, but to bring them to a reckoning? That's the Apoſtles concluſion (*Rom:* 14. 12.) *So then every one of us ſhall give an account of himſelfe to God*; God would not take an account of our wayes while we live, if he did not intend to bring us to an account when we dye. As the omniſcience of God fits him to call every man to an account, ſo it is an evidence that he will. Why ſhould our wayes and workes be ſtrictly obſerved and recorded, if they were not to be judged?

Fifthly, This truth that the eyes of God are upon all the wayes of man, ſhould awaken every man to take heed (as *David* reſolved he would, *Pſal:* 39. 1.) to his wayes. Did we walke as *remembring we are under the All-ſeeing eye*, O how circumſpectly ſhould we walke! doth the Lord inſpect our wayes, O how ſhould we inſpect our owne wayes! It argueth a great deale of Atheiſme in the heart, if not the groſſeſt Atheiſme, yet Atheiſme (*quoad hoc*) as to this or that thing: while that which ſome are afraid to doe, if a man, yea if a child ſee them, they are not afraid to doe though

though they heare that God ſeeth them. To feare to doe a thing when the eye of a creature is upon us, and yet to doe it notwithſtanding God ſeeth us, what is this but either an unbeliefe that the eye of God ſeeth us, or a contempt of his All ſeeing eye? This Divine Attribute, the All-ſeeing eye of God, wel wrought upon the heart by faith, is enough to over-aw the ſinfullneſſe of our hearts. And though the people of God have a higher principle, upon which they forbeare the doing of evill, then this, becauſe God will ſee it, and puniſh it, yet to keep the heart in a holy feare of doing evill upon that principle, is both needfull and our duty. The Apoſtle would not have ſervants doe their Maſters commands *with eye-ſervice as men-pleaſers*. It is indeed a baſeneſs in a ſervant to doe his duty meerely becauſe his Maſters eye is upon him, or to forbeare to doe what is againſt or beſide his duty, becauſe his Maſter ſeeth him, but how great is the impudence and wickedneſs of that ſervaut who will not keep to his duty, when his Maſters eye is upon him! So, in this caſe, meerely to forbeare doing evill, becauſe we heare God ſees us, is eye-ſervice, but how great is their wickedneſs, who will not forbeare to doe evill, though they heare and know that God ſeeth it? Which *Elihu* confirmes yet further in the next words.

Verſ. 22. *There is no darkneſs nor ſhaddow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themſelves.*

This verſe holds out that truth negatively, which the former held out affirmatively. There Gods knowledge of mans wayes, was aſſerted, here his ignorance or neſcience of the wayes of man is denied.

There is no darkneſs, &c.

The words ſeeme to be the prevention of an objection. For ſome poſſibly might ſay, 'Tis true indeed, God hath a large knowledge, his eye ſeeth farre, but we hope we may ſometime be under covert, or compaſſed about with ſuch darkneſs, that the Lord cannot ſee us. Therefore (ſaith *Elihu*) *there is no darkneſs nor ſhaddow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themſelves.* The Prophet gives a parallel proofe and teſtimony of this knowledge of God both in the affirmative and negative part of it.

(*Jer.* 16. 17.) where he first asserts that God seeth all, *mine eyes are upon all their wayes*, and then denyeth, that any thing is a secret unto him, *They are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes.* These latter words of the Prophet are of the same signification with these of *Elihu*,

There is no darkness, &c.

We may take darkness two wayes; First, for naturall darkness, that darkness which spreads it selfe over the face of the earth upon the going downe of the Sun, 'tis the privation of Light. Secondly, there is artificiall darkness, that darkness which men make to hide themselves, and their actions in, from the eye of God or man; many are very skillfull, yea and successefull in making shadowes to hide their actions from men: They cover the evill which they have done with such cunning excuses or flat denyalls, and they cover what they purpose to doe (how foule soever) under such faire trappings of words, and specious pretenses, they glosse their worst actions and intentions with such appearances of good, that the wisest and best sighted men cannot finde them out. When *Absalon* had a most unnaturall as well as a most disloyall purpose to rayse a rebellion against his *king-father*, he coloured it with a devout profession of performing a vow; This was artificiall darkness. 'Tis reported by the naturall Historian, of a little fish, which seeing its enemy neare, casts out a kinde of blackness from it selfe, which darkens the water, and so escapes the danger. Thus men indeed hide themselves from man, and they would hide themselves from God too; but *there is no darkness*, neither naturall nor artificiall, that can cover their wayes from his eye; No,

Nor shaddow of death.

The importance of this expression hath been opened more then once in this book; (*chap.* 3. 5. *chap* 10. 21. *chap.* 12. 22. *chap.* 28. 3.) therefore I shall not stay upon it here; only consider, when he saith, *There is no darkness nor shaddow of death*, by *shaddow of death*, he means extreamest darkness. If there be any darkness (as *Job* speaks *chap.* 10. 22.) like darkness it self, and whose light is as darkness, that is it. The metaphor is taken from the grave, where the dead being buried, have not the least glympse, ray, or shine

shine of light coming in to them, death wraps us up in extreamest darkness. And we finde in Scripture, *the shaddow of death* put first, to expres the extreamest of spiritual darkness, or the darkest spiritual state, (*Isa.* 9. 2.) *The people that walked in darkness, have seen a great light, they that dwell in the land of the shaddow of death, upon them hath the light shined*: that is, they that were wrapped up in the ignorance & utter unbelief of God in Christ, to these is Christ, the true light of God, the Sun of righteousness preached and openly revealed, and they pressed to the receiving of him, that their souls may live further as the shaddow of death is put for the worst of spiritual evils, or to note man's natural state before conversion, so likewise, it is used in Scripture to note the worst of his spiritual evils, who (being converted) is in a spiritual state; He that is in a spiritual state, may be under great spiritual evils, great soul afflictions and troubles may fall upon him; which I conceive *David* intended while he shewed such high confidence, (*Psal.* 23. 4.) *Though I walk through the valley of the shaddow of death, I will fear none evil*: as if he had said, Though I were in the worst of soul-afflictions, having no light of the favour of God shining upon me, nor any comfort in my spirit, though (as *Heman* bemoans his deserted condition (*Psal.* 88. 3.) *My soul is full of troubles, and my life draweth nigh unto the grave, though I am laid in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deep, yet I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staffe they comfort me.* Again, the shaddow of death is often put in Scripture for the worst of outward worldly evils, (*Jer.* 13. 16.) *Give glory to the Lord your God before he cause darkness*, &c. *and while ye look for light, he turn it into the shaddow of death*; that is, while ye expect good times and things, ye fall into the worst, or the worst befal you. Now as these words, *the shaddow of death*, signifie the worst of, both in spirituals and temporals; so here they signifie the closest concealment of moral evils; some sinners think themselves as much out of sight as a buried carcass, and they vail their wickedness with such darkness as is like the very shaddow of death. Sin is it self a shaddow of death, yea death it self, and they who are dead in sins and trespasses, will do their best that their sins may be no more seen then the dead are. But *there is no darkness nor shaddow of death*

Where the workers of iniquity may hide themſelves.

What it is to be *a worker of iniquity*, was opened at the 8th verſe of this chapter, and thither I refer the reader. Only in general know, *Workers of iniquity* are more then ordinary ſinners, they are cunning at the committing, and cunning at the hiding of ſin. Some are but bunglers at ſin, they cannot ſin with ſuch an helliſh skill as others do, and when they have ſinned, they have not the art of hiding it; but others are (as we ſay) their crafts-maſters both wayes, and they are properly called *workers of iniquity*. Yet (ſaith *Elihu*) the very *workers of iniquity*, they that make it their profeſſion, their ſtudy, and their buſineſs to do evil, and to hide the evil they have done, to work miſchief in the dark, and to keep their works in the dark, even they cannot be hid in any darkneſs. And when the Text ſaith, there is no darkneſs, *&c.* wherein the workers of iniquity may hide themſelves; the meaning of it is, they ſtand naked, and in the open light before the eyes of God.

For though *Elihu* doth not ſay from what they cannot *hide themſelves*, yet we may take it two wayes; they cannot hide themſelves, firſt, from the ſight of God; he will diſcern them. The Prophet ſaith of God (*Iſa.* 45. 15.) *Thou art a God that hideſt thy ſelf*, (it is the word of the Text in another conſtruction) that is, as I conceive, it may be expounded, *Thou art an inviſible God.* God hides himſelf naturally, or in his own nature, for that is inviſible: likewiſe God ſomtimes hideth himſelf voluntarily, as ſomtimes he manifeſteth or ſheweth himſelf voluntarily; but he is a God alwayes hid as to his nature, becauſe he is inviſible; and ſo he is called *a God that hideth himſelf*, in oppoſition to Idols or falſe gods, who are obvious to the eyes of men; Idols have eyes and ſee not, but themſelves are ſeen by every eye. Jehovah the true God ſeeth, but hath no eye, neither can any eye ſee him; Thus he is a God hiding himſelf in the ſpirituality of his own being, which groſs Idols cannot: the following words in that Text in the Prophet ſeem to make out this ſence, (*verſ.* 16.) *They ſhall be aſhamed and confounded all of them*, (that is, all Idol-makers, and Idol-worſhippers, ſhall be aſhamed and confounded) *they ſhall go to confuſion together, that are makers of Idols.* Now, as God hideth himſelf both theſe wayes, ſomtimes voluntarily, or in his will, he reſolves to hide himſelf from his people, as *David* complain'd,

plain'd, (*Pſal.* 13. 1.) *How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?*) alwayes in the ſpirituality of his own nature; ſo ſinful men would be hidden too: though they cannot be hidden as to their nature, that being corporeal, yet they would hide themſelves in their will, their wits are bent upon it, to make covers and ſhaddows for themſelves, that they may keep out of the ſight of God, or that they may not be ſeen of him, who cannot be ſeen, but is, in that ſence, *a God that hideth himſelf.*

And as men cannot hide themſelves from the ſight of God, ſo not, ſecondly, from the revenging power of God: This followeth the former; for he that would keep out of the ſight of another, doth it uſually that he may be hid from that danger and evil which he fears that other might bring upon him. Thus it is with the ſinner, he hath his hiding places, he would withdraw himſelf from the revenging power of God, like a malefactor, who is unwilling to appear and come to the Bar before his Judge, but all in vain.

Meer natural or unregenerate men are much hidden from themſelves; that is, they ſee little what themſelves are, they know not their own condition, nor upon what terms they ſtand; even a godly man is much hidden from himſelf, *his life is hid with Chriſt in God*, (Col. 3. 3.) his life is not only hidden from the world, but in a great meaſure from himſelf: the excellency of his ſpiritual ſtate ſurpaſſeth his preſent ſight: but a wicked man is much more hid from himſelf, he doth not ſee the wickedneſs of his own heart, nor the danger, the deſperate danger he is in, he ſeeth not that he is within a ſtep of the pit, or that there is, as it were, but a wainſcot between him and hell fire; he ſeeth none of theſe things. Thus a wicked man is hidden from himſelf, and 'tis his work to prepare darkneſs and ſhaddows of death to cover his dead works from God. But there is *no darkneſs* will ſerve his purpoſe, nor *ſhaddow of death wherein he may hide himſelf.*

Hence Note.

Firſt, *It is uſual for, and natural to ſinners, to ſeek hiding places.*

When *Elihu* ſaith, *There is no darkneſs*, &c. he plainly intimates, that it is the deſigne and buſineſs of ſinners, to make darkneſs to hide themſelves; it is as much their buſineſs to hide themſelves when they have done evil, as it is their buſineſs to do evil.

While

while the workers of iniquity confeſs in general the eyes of God behold their ways (they deny not in word that God is All-ſeeing) yet, as they often blear the eye of man, ſo they are not out of hope to put darkneſs and raiſe a miſt between themſelves and the eye of God; Or if they rile not to this vain thought, that they can hide themſelves from God, yet they come to this, that God hideth himſelf (as not regarding what they do) from them. Hence *David* affirms of the wicked man, (*Pſal.* 10. 11.) *He hath ſaid in his heart, God hath forgotten, he hideth his face, he will never ſee it.* Many ſay in their hearts, God ſeeth them not, while with their tongues they confeſs he is an all-ſeeing God. The heart hath a tongue in it as well as the head, and theſe two tongues ſeldome ſpeak the ſame language: While the head-tongue ſaith, we cannot hide our ſelves from the ſight of God, the heart-tongue of wicked men will ſay, God will hide himſelf from us, he will not ſee. But if their heart ſpeak not thus, then as the Prophet ſaith, (*Iſa.* 29. 15.) *They dig deep to hide their counſels from God*; ſurely they have a hope to hide their counſels, elſe they would not dig deep to hide them. Their digging is not proper, but tropical; as men dig deep to hide what they would not have ſeen in the earth; ſo they by heir wits, plots, and devices, do their beſt to hide their counſels from God, and *they ſay who ſeeth, who knoweth?* We, ſurely, are not ſeen either by God or man.

Now 'tis very natural for ſinners to endeavour the hiding of themſelves from God upon a two-fold account; Firſt, To avoid ſhame; All ſinners are not altogether deboiſt, all have not altogether baffled their own conſciences, they have a kinde of modeſty, they would not be ſeen ſinning; it troubles them not to do evil, but a fear to be detected in doing it is their trouble. Secondly, Sinners hide themſelves for fear; ſo *Adam* did, he was afraid as well as aſhamed, *I was afraid* (ſaid he) *becauſe I was naked, and I hid my ſelf*, (Gen. 3. 10.) The Prophet tells us of ſuch (*Iſa.* 2. 21.) *They ſhall go into the clefts of the rock, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majeſty, when he ſhall ariſe to ſhake terribly the earth.* We finde all ſorts call to *the hills to hide them, for fear of him that ſate on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb*, (Rev. 6. 15, 16.)

Secondly, Obſerve.

How much ſoever ſinners attempt, yet they cannot hide themſelves from God.

Let

Let them ſtudy never ſo long, and dig never ſo deep, they cannot be hid: Where can a ſinner be hid from him who is every where? Or, what thing can be our covering from him, in whoſe ſight all things are open? Then let none think they have made a good market in ſinning, when they have hid their ſins from the eyes of men; what will it avail to hide your ſelves from men, when you lie open and manifeſt to the eye of God? read *Pſal.* 139. 12. *Amos* 3. 2. The Apoſtle ſaith (1 *Tim.* 5. 24, 25.) *ſome mens ſins are open before hand, going before to judgment*; (that is, other men quickly ſee what they are, & can judge what they have done) *and ſome men, they follow after*; though they were hidden at the firſt, yet they are afterward diſcovered unto men often, as alwayes unto God: As they are not hid from God now, ſo he will bring them forth at laſt, in the ſight of men: that the Apoſtle adds in the next verſe, *Likewiſe alſo the good works of ſome are manifeſt before hand, and they that are otherwiſe cannot be hid.* The word *otherwiſe* may have a two-fold reference; Firſt to the word manifeſt: As if he had ſaid, though the good works of a man be not preſently manifeſt, yet they cannot be long hid, they ſhall be opened and revealed. Secondly, The word *otherwiſe* may refer to good works, and ſo it reaches the point fully; that is, thoſe works which are not good, or otherwiſe then good, cannot be hid, though men labour much to hide them. Sinners, leave off your hiding, leave off your hiding, for you ſhall not be hid. There is no way for ſinners to hide themſelves from God; they may hide themſelves in God, in the love, in the favour and mercy of God. Thus ſinners may hide themſelves in God, but from God they cannot be hid. Chriſt is a hiding place unto his people, and he is ſo in a double reſpect; Firſt, from trouble, or in time of trouble; thus *David* ſpake (*Pſal.* 32. 7.) *Thou art my hiding place: The name of the Lord is a ſtrong Tower* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 18. 10.) *the righteous runneth into it* (for ſhelter in time of trouble) *and is ſafe.* The Prophet is expreſs in this, (*Iſa.* 32. 2.) *A man* (that is Chriſt) *ſhall be for a hiding place from the winde, & a covert from the Tempeſt:* Chriſt is truly ſo, as to the outward troubles and ſtorms which men raiſe againſt his people in the things of this life; he is ſo, eſpecially as to thoſe internal troubles and ſtorms which Satan, or our owne unbelieving hearts raiſe againſt us about the things and concernments of the next life. *That man who is*

aſſo

also God, who is God-man, is the hiding place of humbled sinners, against the assault of all evils, whether temporal or spiritual. Secondly, As Christ is a hiding place from those troubles which men bring us unto for righteousness sake, or which Satan and our own hearts bring us into by raising questions about our interest in the righteousness of Christ; So he is a hiding place for us against our own unrighteousness. Sinners or unrighteous persons cannot hide themselves from Christ. And as Christ is the best hiding place from bodily dangers, so he is the only hiding place from soul-danger: Any sinner may hide himself in Christ, as to the guilt of sin, whose eyes are opened to see and acknowledge his sin. Or more distinctly, sinners under a fourfold consideration may hide themselves in Christ; First, if humbled sinners. Secondly, if confessing sinners. Thirdly, if reforming sinners. Fourthly, believing sinners Christ is a hiding place to all such sinners. And seeing no sinner can hide himself from the wrath of God by any means of his own devising or contriving: Let all sinners give over such vain contrivements, and learn that Gospel wisdome, to hide themselves in Christ from that wrath which is to come. When we labour to hide our selves any other way, we lose our labour, and do not hide our selves from God, but God from our selves; that is, we hide the favour and mercy of God from our selves.

Cum videri nos non credimus, in sole clausos oculos tenemus. Illum à nos abscondimus, non nos illi. Greg. l. 25. c. 6.

Lastly Observe.

Men are not easily perswaded that they cannot hide themselves from the sight of God.

That hath much hold of us, which we are often warned to avoid. This is not the only place of the whole Scripture, no nor of this particular book where this truth is held forth. There are many and many Scriptures wherein this common truth is pressed upon us. And doth not this (if not strongly infer, yet) intimate at least that man doth not easily believe it? Yea, Is it not an argument that man is apt to nourish himself in those vain hopes, that he can hide himself from God, or that he shall be hid from God? I may cast the foolish presumptions of men about this thing into four sorts. First, Some hope to be hid in the croud, or that they shall not be taken notice of among so many. Secondly, The eyes of others are so darkned, that their sins are hid from themselves, yea they

they take their vices for vertues, their evil acts for good; and because they see no evil in what they do, they are perswaded, or presume God doth not. Thirdly, Many are never so well pleased as when they are flattered, or when others not only hide the sinfulness of their wayes from them, but commend and extol them as vertuous and praise worthy. And because their evil ways appear good to some men, they cannot be convinced that there is any evil in them appearing to God. Lastly, As all impenitent sinners put their sins out of their [illegible]ght, so nothing pleaseth them more then this imagination, that they shall never come into the sight of God.

Surely the Lord would never urge this matter so often upon the children of men if it were not so. But let sinners consider what they will do, and what will become of them, seeing, as it is impossible that they should be hid, so it will be most intollerable for them them to appear and stand before God in the day of judgement, (*Psal.* 1. 5.) All must come to judgment, and appear at the Bar, but it will be an inexpressible grief to appear, and not be approved, or to appear and then be condemned. Therefore be wise, and hide your selves where you may be hid; do not attempt to hide your selves (which is the attempt of most sinners) where you cannot be hid: They who will needs hide themselves in that darkness and shaddow of death, here spoken of, shall be cast into utter darkness, and abide for ever in that infernal valley of the shaddow of death, in which there is no ease to be had, and from which there is no release to be got. Darkness and death will be the portion of those sinners in the next world, who have studied to shaddow their sins with any kinde of darkness in this.

JOB. Chap. 34. Vers. 23, 24, 25.

For he will not lay upon man more then right, that he should enter into judgement with God.
He shall break in pieces mighty men without number, and set others in their stead.
Therefore he knoweth their workes, and he over-turneth them in the night, so that they are destroyed.

IN the 23d verse, being the first of this context, *Elihu* further justifyeth the severest proceedings of God with man; He that layeth upon man no more then is right, may be justified in whatsoever he layeth upon him; But God layeth upon man no more then is right, Therefore &c. The Assumption is expresse in the text.

Vers. 23. *For he will not lay upon man more then is right.*

The text strictly rendred, is, *He will not lay upon man more.* Our translaters supply the words, *then is right* to determine what that *more* is which God will not lay upon man.

The words have a two-fold sence.

First, Some interpreters render them as a direct deniall of any power seated in or liberty given unto man, to plead, capitulate, or to come in judgement with God; *Elihu* charging it upon *Job*, that he had not done well in taking or using such a liberty to complaine about his condition; addeth here (according to this interpretation) God neither hath nor will indulge man a liberty (as he hath not given him a just cause) to complain as if he had done him wrong. And if man when God hath once declared his mind, and published his sentence, should make his defence or offer to produce his reasonings against it, the Lord will not suffer it, he will not permit man to proceed in such a way, seeing the sentence of God and what he doth upon it is alwayes just, and the right stands ever on his side, as well as the soveraignty is ever vested in him. Master *Broughton* translates the whole verse to this sense, *Therefore it is not for man ever to purpose to enter into judgement before the Omnipotent*; there is no appeale from God, nor will he admit

Quia non ultra unquam ponet deus super virum. i. e. potestatem homini nunquam faciet, ut de se ille queri possit. Merc: *Neq; enim ultra in hominis potestate est, ut veniat cum deo in Judicio,* Vulg:

admit sinners by any artifices, or delayes, to interrupt the progresse of his justice.

Secondly, The words (as we render them) carry both an assertion, that God is just, and a demonstration of it; *For he will not lay upon man more then is right, that he should enter into judgement with God*; that is, man hath no cause to enter into judgement with God, if God should give him leave, and let him be at his liberty in that poynt; *for God will not lay upon man more then is right.*

There is another supply of a word which also beareth a good sense, and suites wel with this exposition; thus, *God will not lay upon man more then he can beare, (or hath strength to beare) that he should enter into judgement with him*; if we reade the text so, then that of the Apostle (1 *Cor:* 10. 13.) is a cleare exposition of it, *There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man; but God is faithfull, who will not suffer you to be tempted, above that you are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to beare it.* A temptation or affliction common to man, is but such as man may beare; God will not overburden his people, he knoweth what flesh and blood, as also what Grace can beare. As a man would not lay such a weight upon a childe, as would burthen a man, (we lay a childs burthen upon a child, and a mans burthen upon a man) so the Lord measures and weighs out his judgements in proportion to every mans strength, he will not lay upon him more then he is able to beare. That's a good sense, and hath a cleare reason in it, why man should not complaine of what God layeth upon him, it being only proportionate to his strength.

Non imponet et amplius quam ferre possit. Drus.

But I shall rather prosecute the text according to the supply given in our translation, which makes the reason why all such complaints should be forborne and silenced, to be this, because the sufferings of man are never proportion'd beyond his desert.

He will not lay upon man more then right.

That is, more then he hath deserved, or is equitable in his case; whatsoever is layd, or imposed upon man beyond right, he hath cause to complaine of, and may traverse the Judgement, or desire another hearing, yea he may appeale to some higher Judge if there be any; But if what is awarded against him be right according

cording to Law, and suitable to Justice, let the sentence be what it will (let him be able to beare it or no, much more if he be able also to beare it, as in this case it is) he hath no cause at all to desire a review of it. Thus it is (saith *Elihu*) in all the dealings of God with man, *He will not lay upon man more then is right,*

that he should enter into judgement with God.

To enter (or goe) into judgement (as the word is) is either to begin or renew a sute, and to desire the hearing of the cause againe. God makes no faulty Judgements, why then should any cause determin'd by him come to a second hearing? there may be reason enough among men to heare a cause againe, but what God resolves, needs not be reviewed much lesse reversed. Here then *Elihu* meets with those frequent complaints of *Job* under his afflictions, and likewise with those his severall motions, and earnest petitions, to have his cause heard afresh, as if God had prest him too sore, or, at least, had not done him right in suffering him to be so sorely prest by men. Thus *Elihu* seemes to say; *God never gave any man any just cause, to plead his cause over againe with him, nor hath he given thee (O Job) any cause to desire it of him.* 'Tis true, carnall men, yea and sometimes godly men, when (as *Job* here) they are greatly afflicted, are ready to thinke and say they are overseverely dealt with; But the reason of *Elihu* stands good and firme against all these thoughts and sayings. *For he will not lay upon man more then is right.*

Hence note.

God never wronged, nor will wrong any man.

There are two speciall cases, in which God never did, nor ever will wrong man; First, he will not wrong man by denying him that reward, which he hath freely promised, no man shall serve God for naught; he shall not say, God hath promised, but he hath not performed. The experience of his people seale to the truth of his promises, as wel as their faith imbraceth it. That hope of man which is anchored in a promise of God, never miscarried nor made any man ashamed. Secondly, God will not wrong man, by laying upon him a greater punishment then he hath threatned. The Magistrate cannot be charged with laying more punishment upon an offender, then is right, if he punisheth him not more then the

the Law alloweth. There may be a great deale of severity (I grant) in punishing up to the rigor of the Law, but there is no unrighteousnes in it. The Mosaical law allowed of forty stripes; now if they had layd forty-one upon any offender, they had layd upon him more then was right, because they exceeded the Law; and to have layd full forty stripes, which was the utmost they could by Law, had been severe, therefore they usually abated one stripe at least; Hence the Apostle *Paul* saith (2 *Cor:* 11.24.) *Of the Jewes five times received I forty stripes save one*; if they had given *Paul* forty stripes they had done no wrong as to the Law, though one had been too many for and a wrong to him who had not broken their law. Seeing the Lord lays no more upon the worst of sinners, then the law alloweth, he doth not lay upon man more then right. Yea not only the chastisements which the Lord layeth upon his owne servants, but the greatest punishments which he layeth upon the worst of the wicked, in this world, are much lesse then might with Justice be inflicted. This was *Ezra's* humble acknowledgement before the Lord (*Ezra* 9.13.) *And after all that is come upon us, for our evill deeds, and for our great trespasse, seeing that thou our God hast punished us lesse then our iniquities deserve.* The punishment that was upon the people of *Israel*, was exceeding great, in so much that *Daniel* saith in his prayer (*Chap:* 9.12, 12.) *Under the whole heavens, hath not been done, as hath been done upon Jerusalem*, yet *Ezra* speaking of that very dispensation, saith, *Thou hast punished us lesse, then our iniquities deserve. In this life the greatest of our punishments, are lesse then the least of our sins.* Every sin, or transgression of the Law, deserves eternall death; therefore in this life the greatest punishments that fall upon sinners, are lesse then their sins. As the least mercies which God bestoweth upon them, are greater then the greatest of their deservings. (That was *Jacobs* free confession (*Gen:* 32.10.) *I am not worthy of the least of* (or I am lesse then) *all the mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servant*) So the greatest punishments that fall upon them in this life, are lesse then the least of their sins: And in the next life, where sinners shall have full measure, heaped up, pressed downe, running over, and that for ever, yet then they shall not have one graine more, either of weight or measure, then they have deserved. *The Lord layeth upon no man in this life so much, nor in that to come more then is right.*

Hence:

Hence it followeth, Secondly.

Man hath no cause to complaine of God, or God hath not given any man any cause to complaine whatsoever his sufferings are.

Why should he complaine who hath but his right? As God hath not given any man a liberty to complaine, so he hath not given any man just occasion, or a true reason to complaine. If the burden of punishment be heavy upon any man, let him thanke his own sin, or selfe for it, he hath but his due from God. We are often cruel to and wrong our selves, God is usually mercifull, and never but just to us; yea how great soever any affliction is, 'tis a mercy that 'tis no greater; and God can quickly make it greater, how great soever it is, and still be just. *As he never doth more then he may, so he never doth so much as he can in punishing us.* The Lord hath more in the treasures of his wrath, then yet he hath powred upon the worst of sinners. Nor indeed can the most capacious vessels of wrath, hold all his wrath; 'tis, as himselfe is, infinite. *Cain* sayd, *My punishment is greater then I can beare* (Gen: 4. 13.) yet God could have made his punishment greater then it was. Therefore *Jeremy* confessed (*Lam:* 3. 22.) *It is of the Lords mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions faile not.* Whatsoever is lesse then utter consumption, hath some mixture of compassion in it, every punishment hath somewhat of compassion in it, except that of everlasting damnation. O then let all flesh feare and tremble to enter into Judgement with God, to complaine or take offence at any of his proceedings with them.

There are foure things considerable in God, which should stop all mens mouths, from daring to doe so.

First, He is most powerfull; there is no escaping out of his hands.

Secondly, He is most wise and seeth quite through all that man hath done with his hand, yea all that hath been contrived in his heart.

Thirdly, He is most just, and will not be taken off from doing less, neither can he be provoked to do more then is right to any man.

Fourthly, How should man fear to enter into judgement with God, seeing his judgments are past finding out; they are, as the Scripture saith, *a great deep*, we are not able to fathome them; therefore wo unto those that complain of, or murmure against them: we should alwayes pray with *David*, (*Psal.* 143. 2.) *Lord, enter not into judgement with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified*: and we should alwayes be afraid to enter into judgement with God, for he will not only justifie, but magnifie himself and his works in the sight of all men living. We should be so far from entring into judgement with God (which many do when they think they do it not) that we should continually beg him, not to enter into judgement with us; for we are not only unable to stand before him, but must certainly be broken before him; as it followeth,

Vers. 24. *He shall break in pieces mighty men without number, and set others in their stead.*

As *Job* had often complained of his own troubles, so he had sometimes of the prosperity of wicked men, or that God suffered them who were not worthy to live, yet to live in pomp, power, and pleasure. Thus he expostulated the matter, (*chap.* 21. 7.) *Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?* &c. We may conceive *Elihu* removing that stumbling stone, and answering him in these words, while he telleth us what work the Lord often maketh in the world in those his lesser and particular dayes of judgement, among the mighty of the world. He not only striketh and woundeth, troubleth and vexeth them, but breaketh them, yea, *breaketh them in pieces*. The words are a comparison between the mighty, & a potters vessel, of whom *David* saith (*Psal.* 2. 9.) *Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, thou shalt* (not only give them a knock, or a crack, but) *dash them in pieces as a potters vessel*; and he can break them so small, that there shall not be *found in the bursting of them* (as the Prophet speaks, *Isa.* 30. 14.) *a sherd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water withal out of the pit*: Thus the Lord shall break in pieces, not the poor, and weak, and mean, but

Mighty men.

Or as some render, *He shall break in pieces many men*; the Hebrew word refers to both quantities, to great in bigness, and great in number; but because we have their innumerableness mentioned

יָרֹעַ *est illibus subigere & mollire.*

Hieronymus *interpretatur multos.*

כביר *ad utramque quantitatem refertur, sed melo fortes.* Merc.

tioned distinctly in the next clause, it is best to render the word by greatness in power or might here. For least any should think God could break only a few mighty men, therefore it is said, he shall break in pieces mighty men, in all the notions of might, the mighty in corporal strength, the mighty in civil strength, power, or authority, yea martial mighty men, if they stand in his way, and hinder his work;

Without number.

All these God breaketh in pieces like a Potters vessel, as if they were but a swarm of flies, and sweeps them away in a moment: As if he had said, God will give innumerable examples of his infinite power and unbyass'd justice in destroying the wicked, he hath and will destroy so many of them, that no man knoweth how many he hath destroyed, or will destroy.

לא חקר pro וחקר בל, *ita ut numerum eorum investigari non possit,* Pisc. *Certo numero contineri non possunt, quos propter peccata Dei justitia conteret,* Aqui.

There is another reading of the words, Our Translaters put it in the margin of our Bibles, *He shall break in pieces mighty men without searching out,* which may have a two-fold interpretation.

First, He shall break them in pieces, and no man ought to search or enquire into his doings, or *say unto him* (as that mighty Monarch confessed, *Dan.* 4. 35.) *What doest thou?* And thus it answers what was said in the former verse, *They shall not enter into judgement with God.* Some have a priviledge at Sea to passe without searching, no man must enquire what they carry, or what their lading is; surely when the Lord breaketh mighty men, no man may search into his doings, or enquire into his actions, further then for his own instruction and admonition, that he may answer the purpose of God in them, and give him glory.

Deus cui omnia nota sunt, non opus habet, in facta hominum inquirere, Drus.

Secondly, He will break them in pieces *without searching*; that is, without any formal examination or usual wayes of Process, at least without any known to us. The Lord needs not to stand searching as men do, to finde out matters against the mighty, to frame articles, or to bring in his Bill of Attainder against them; God needeth not search to know, because he knoweth all things without searching, and therefore may justly break men in pieces without this kinde of searching; or, *He will break them in pieces without inquisition*; that is, without shewing cause why. God doth not alwayes publish the reasons of his proceedings, his judgements are often secret, though never unjust. We render well, *He will break in pieces mighty men.* *Without*

Without number.

That is, how many soever they are, or though they are innumerable, yet he will break them in pieces as one man: Thus the word is used (*chap.* 5. 9. *chap.* 9. 11. In both which places the Reader may finde the extent and emphasis of this expression, *without number*, further explained) only consider, that these mighty men without number, may be taken two wayes.

First, Collectively, as combined by leagues, or as marshall'd by orders into an Host: as if he had said, though an Army of them be gathered together, even a numberles Army, yet the Lord can break them in pieces, (*Isa.* 8. 9.) *Associate your selves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird your selves, and ye shall be broken in pieces.*

Secondly, We may take these mighty men singly or personally; Thus the Lord breaketh in pieces *mighty men without number*, one after another, one at this time, and another at that time; how many of them soever arise up one after another to oppose him, to oppress his people, or to do wickedly, they shall surely be broken. Mr *Broughton* renders to this sence, *He bruiseth mighty men without end*, he doth not break them without end, as having no end in breaking them, but as without end, notes his breaking them endlesly, or for ever. If men will sin without end, he can break them without end; he can renew destruction, as fast as they renew transgression.

Hence Observe, First,

God can easily ruine the mightiest men of the world.

He can break them in pieces, as an earthen vessel, with an iron rod, and how soon is that done? Both the holy Scriptures, and humane Histories abound with such examples. What a number of mighty men inhabited the old world? *There were Giants in the earth in those days,* (Gen. 6. 4.) yet God overthrew them all by a flood, they sank like lead in those mighty waters. What mighty men inhabited *Canaan*, before the children of *Israel* came to possess it? The searchers of the land brought in a report, that they were but as Grashoppers to them, & they had Cities walled up to heaven, yet the Lord broke in pieces all those mighty men, *Sihon the King of the Amorites, and Og the King of Bashan*; and when *David* came to the Crown, he (in Gods strength) destroyed the rest of

them. What mighty men were they that ſate upon the Throne of the four Monarchies? They had in their dayes the rule of the whole world, yet the Lord brake them in pieces. Firſt, the Aſſyrian, then the Perſian; the Grecian, and the Roman Monarchs were alſo broken in pieces: This was revealed to the golden head in a dream, (*Dan.* 2. 35.) *Then was the Iron, the Clay, the Braſſe, the Silver, and the Gold broken in pieces, and became like the chaffe of the Summer threſhing floor.* The mighty men of Iſrael, (when they ſinned mightily) the mighty men of the ten Tribes, yea the mighty men of the two Tribes of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, God brake in pieces; his own mighty people could not ſtand before him, when they corrupted themſelves, and would not be made clean. God breaketh mighty men, as eaſily as they break his commandments: And uſually when mighty men come to that height of ſinning, to ſin, or break his Commandments with eaſe, he commands them (for his own eaſe, as he is pleaſed to ſpeak *Iſa.* 1. 24.) to be broken in pieces. To ſin with eaſe, is a ſure ſigne of a hard heart, yea of a prophane heart. He was a mighty man of this temper, whoſe breaking in pieces the Lord threatned in ſuch wrathful Rhetorick by his holy Prophet, (*Ezek.* 21. 25, 26, 27.) *And thou prophane wicked Prince of Iſrael, whoſe day is come, when iniquity ſhall have an end; thus ſaith the Lord God, Remove the Diadem, and take off the Crown: this ſhall not be the ſame, Exalt him that is low, and abaſe him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn, and it ſhall be no more, until he come whoſe right it is, and I will give it him.* What breaking words are here! Even a treble overturn denounc'd againſt the mighty. Thus ſaid the bleſſed Virgin while her ſoul was magnifying the Lord, and her Spirit rejoycing in God her Saviour, (*Luke* 1. 52.) *He hath put down the mighty from their ſeats, and exalted them of low degree.*

Secondly, *In that he breaketh in pieces the mighty without number,*

Obſerve.

'Tis no matter to God either how mighty or how many the wicked are.

I have heretofore ſpoken of the multiplyed acts of Divine Juſtice, and of the unwearied out-goings of his powerfull providence to abate the pride of man, and therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it, but only caution the mighty ones of the earth, in the words of the Pſalmiſt upon this point, expreſt in the very words of this Text; for, God having ſaid to his Son, to whom he had given the Nations for an inheritance, (*Pſal.* 2. 9.) Thou ſhalt break them with a rod of iron, and (in caſe of their non-ſubmiſſion to his Scepter) daſh them in pieces like a Potters veſſel, he preſently adds, (*ver.* 10.) *Be wiſe now therefore, O ye Kings, be inſtructed ye Judges of the earth; ſerve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce with trembling; Kiſs the Son, leſt he be angry, and ye periſh from the way.*

Yet though God be often at breaking work, he is not alwayes at it; for when he hath broken in pieces mighty men without number, he (as it followeth in the Text) will

Set others in their ſtead.

We may ſuppoſe theſe words given in upon a two-fold account.

Firſt, To ſhew the abſoluteneſs of the power of God, as well in ſetting up, as in caſting down:

Secondly, To ſhew that we need not be diſmayed nor diſcouraged, when we ſee God breaking in pieces ſome or many mighty men, for he can finde out others to ſupply their room, and fill up the breaches which he hath made. *He ſets others in their ſtead.* The force of the Hebrew is, *He ſhall make others to ſtand*; and that's more then barely to ſet another in the ſtead or place of thoſe that are removed and broken. God is able not only when many fall to raiſe up others, but he can alſo eſtabliſh and ſettle thoſe whom he raiſeth up. That's the meaning of *Elihu*, when he ſaith

Ne ex hoc creditur deperire humani generis ſtatus, addit & ſtare facit alios, Aquin.

And ſet others in their ſtead.

Elihu doth not determine who or what theſe others are; God may make his choice where and of whom he pleaſeth, in what family or tribe he pleaſeth, to ſet up in the place of thoſe mighty men, whom he, at any time, is provoked to break in pieces. The words are plain; Note only two things from them.

Firſt, *God hath as abſolute a power to ſet up, as to pull down when and whom he pleaſeth.*

(Psal. 75. 6, 7.) *Promotion cometh neither from the East, nor from the West, Nor from the South, but God is the Judge, he putteth down one, and setteth up another.* The same Soveraignty of God is asserted (*Dan.* 4. 17.) *To the intent that the living may know, that the most high ruleth in the Kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.* God sometimes setteth up those that are base in their conditions or manners for a scourge or punishment; sometimes he setteth up those that are base in their state or condition, being either men of meanest birth, or men laid lowest by affliction, (*Psal.* 113. 7, 8.) *He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghil; that he may set him with Princes, even with the Princes of his people.* No man is so poor, but the Lord can enrich him; no man so low, but he can raise him up. He can bring a man from a dunghil to a Palace, and from the dust to a Throne. *Saul* was cast down, God broke him in pieces, though a mighty man, and set up *David* in his stead; *He chose David his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds, from following the Ewes great with young, he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his Inheritance:* (Psal. 78. 70. 71.) When God pull'd down *Haman* (the great favourite of *Ahasuerus*) who had plotted to advance *Mordecai* to the gallows, and ruine the whole seed of the Jewes, God did not only break him and his plot, but really advanced *Mordecai* into greater favour and confidence with his Prince then ever *Haman* had before.

Secondly, Note from the force of the word, *to make to stand.*

The Lord can establish those whom he setteth up.

The Lord doth not only set up, but keep up whom he pleaseth. Though they are weak whom he setteth up, yet he can keep them up; though they whom he setteth up, are opposed by the strong, yet he can keep them up. He can make a shrub stand fast, though opposed by a Cedar; and a reed to stand firm like a rock, though opposed by an Oak.

Thirdly, Note.

The Lord taketh care of the Government of the world.

He is not for breaking work only, he is for setting and setling too. God will not let the body of a people perish for want of a head; but when in judgement he hath broken one in pieces, he in

in mercy sets up another. Mighty men are like pillars, which bear the weight of a whole Commonwealth or Kingdom. God rarely deals with Nations, as *Sampson* did with the house wherein the Philistims were assembled, who at once pull'd away the pillar, and pull'd down the house; but if he pulleth away one pillar, he puts in another, that the house may stand. God will not leave the world without rule or rulers: when he takes with one hand, he gives with another; when *Judas* the Traytor was broken, Christ found out (a better man) *Matthias* to set in his stead. And when the whole Nation or Church of the Jewes was broken and rejected, God called in the Gentiles, and set them up for a Church and people to himself in their stead; and (which is the greatest instance of all) when Jesus Christ was taken from the earth, when he left the world, who was the mighty one (he was first broken in pieces for our sins, and afterwards taken away) yet he gave a supply, and left us another in his stead; *I will not leave you comfortless,* (saith he *John* 14. 18.) *I will come unto you,* though not till the great day in person, yet every day in the gifts and graces of my Spirit. *I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;* (John 14. 16.) Again, (*John* 16. 13.) *When he the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all truth.* God sent the Spirit in Christ's stead; he doth that for us which Christ did for us while he abode on the earth: and therefore the holy Spirit is not unfitly call'd the Vicar of Christ here on earth, he feeds the flock of Christ, he looks to his people, he teacheth, he comforteth them in Christ's stead. And thus in Nations, when God breaketh one Governour, he sets up an other in his stead; he will not leave Nations without guides and leaders, nor suffer the staff of Government to be utterly broken, which is the greatest plague that can come upon any people. From the whole verse take these tree deductions.

First, *There is a vanity and an uncertainty, at least the vanity of uncertainty in all worldly greatness and powers.*

God blasts and breaks them as he pleaseth: The most substantial things on earth are but as a shaddow; or like the Land-sea's continually flowing and ebbing. One is cast down, and another is exalted; one is broken, and another is set up; yea, the same man who was lately exalted and set up, may quickly be cast down and broken.

broken. There is no assurance to be had of the best things here below, but only this, that we cannot be sure of them: and 'tis good for us, that we cannot be sure of the best things here below, both because we are so apt to say, *It is good for us to be here*, where yet our best things are not to be had, as also because by this consideration we may be provoked to look after, and make sure of better things then any are here enjoyed, even those best things which are under hope.

Secondly, *Great examples of God's judgements, are to be eyed and marked.*

Why doth *Elihu* call *Job* to this consideration, but that he might be humbled, and give God glory; it is not for nought that God breaks in pieces the mighty ones of the earth, (1 *Cor.* 10. 11.) *All these things have hapned unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.* As all those things among the Jewes were Types; so all that God doth to this day upon the Princes, and Powers of the world, are but as types and ensamples; they are for admonition, that we should consider those sins which have brought such judgments upon men, such breaking judgements, and avoid them. Some will never see sin in it self, but in the judgments of God all may see what sin is; when mighty men are broken in pieces, what will God do with the rest, if they sin against him, and provoke the eyes of his glory? *Zenacharib* that proud Prince, who invaded the land of Israel in the time of *Hezekiah*, being broken in pieces by his own bowels (his sons slew him) it was ordered to be writ upon his Tomb, *Let every one that seeth me, learn to fear God, and not to defie him, as I have done.* The breaking of the powers of the earth, should exceedingly exalt the fear of God in our hearts. *It is better to learn wisdome by the punishment of others, then by our own.*

Nunquam culpam suam reprobi nisi in pœna agnoscunt. Greg. lib. 25. Moral. cap. 9.

In me intuens pius esto. Herod. lib. 2.

Quicunque celsa dominatur aula me videat & tu Troja, nunquam documenta dedit sors majora, quam fragili loco starent superbi. Senec. in Troad. de Hecuba, Act: 1. Sc. 1.

Thirdly, If God will break the mighty, though many, yea though innumerable; This is comfort to the people of God when they are opprest, and broken by oppressors, let them remember God is able to break their oppressors, though they rise up like Hydra's heads one after another; read the whole fifty and second Psalm, as also the 39th and 40th verses of the 107th Psalm, as a clear proof of this. *Elihu* having shewed what sad breaches God makes upon mighty men, makes a fourth inference in the words following.

Vers.

Vers. 25. *Therefore he knoweth their works, and he overturneth them in the night, so that they are destroyed.*

For as much as God breaketh them, it is an argument that he knoweth what they are, and what they have been doing; There is a threefold reading of these words.

First, Some read them as implying God's making others to know their works, God maketh the secret sins of men visible, by his visible judgements. Wrath seen, may give us a sight of sin. Some insist much upon this exposition; and 'tis a truth, the Lord by his judgments brings to light, and doth as it were spread open, as in the face of the Sun, the wickedness and wicked deeds of mighty men: that all may know his judgements are deserved by their works, he makes their works known.

Propterea facit ut nota sint facta ipsorum. Bez.

יכיר *cognoscit aliqui exponunt faci, cognoscere, sc. facit ut ab omnibus eorum scelera cognoscantur.* Merc.

Secondly, Others render, *He maketh them know or acknowledge their works*; The Lord at last by sore, and severe judgements, will extort confessions from the worst of them, he will make the mighty acknowledge that their works have been nought, and their wayes perverse. In Scripture the same word signifies to know, or to confess and acknowledg. Thus here, he makes them to know or to acknowledge what their works have been.

Thirdly, Rather take it, as we render, of Gods act in taking notice of all they had done; *Therefore he knoweth their works:* As if *Elihu* had said, these mighty men of the earth, thought themselves under covert, or that the Lord took no notice of them, nor of their works, their works were done in the dark, and they supposed the Lord could not pierce into them; but he will make it appear, that he knew their works, when he maketh his justice appear in punishing them for their works.

הכיר *non significat notum facio quod sciam, sed tantum cognosco, ideo transtuli cognoscit.* Drus.

Hence Note.

We have an assurance that God knoweth the works of all men, because he punisheth all wicked works, or the works of the wicked so punctually and exactly.

He punisheth many of them here, and will punish them all hereafter: when we see him breaking the mighty men of the world, 'tis a proof that God was in their Cabinet counsels, and saw what was done there, we may conclude he knew their works, though men knew them not; he could never lay his judgements so exactly

actly upon them as he doth, if he did not know their works: That God knows the works of all men, is a point I have met with before, and therefore pass from it here.

And he overturneth them in the night.

There are several readings of this clause.

First, Some thus, *Therefore the Lord knoweth their works, and turneth into night*; that is, he turneth their prosperity into adversity, he bringeth trouble and affliction upon them; they lived before in a day of prosperity, in a day of power and worldly greatness, but he turneth them into night.

Simul atque mutavit noctem &c. Jun. *i. e. Lucem protulit, qua revelantur omnia in judicio ejus.* Id.

Secondly, Or, as others thus, *He turneth the night*, that is, he changeth the night into day, he takes away the dark and close covers of their sins, and makes them as manifest as the light; Now, as the Apostle saith (*Eph.* 5. 13.) *That which maketh manifest, is light*; If God were not light, he could not *bring to light the hidden things of darkness, nor manifest the counsels of the heart.*

Thirdly thus, *Therefore he knoweth their works, and when the night is turned, he destroyeth them*; that is, they are destroyed and perish as soon and as easily as the day takes place of the night; or as soon as the night is turned into day, so soon doth the Lord destroy them, he can quickly make an end of them, he can destroy them with the morning light.

We render, and I judge that best, *He overturneth them* (their persons) *in the night*; and so *Elihu* points at the season, or time, of Gods breaking and overthrowing them, he doth it *in the night*. We may take it strictly, as in the case of *Pharaoh* and the Egyptians, (*Exod.* 12. 29.) as also in that of *Belshazzer*, (*Dan.* 5. 30.) or, *in the night*, that is, suddenly, unexpectedly; Though a man be destroyed in the day, yet if it be done suddenly, he looking for no such matter, we may say it was done in the night; because then men are most secure: This way of expressing an unlookt for evil, the coming of in the night, was opened at the twentieth verse, therefore I shall not stay upon it, *He overturneth them in the night.*

So that they are destroyed.

Elihu said before *He shall break in pieces mighty men*: Here he saith, *they are destroyed*; that is, they shall be broken to purpose, or

or throughly; God doth not break them in pieces for correction, but for destruction; there are great breakings upon the persons and estates of some men, and yet it is but for correction; others the Lord breaketh for utter ruine, (as here) *so that they are destroyed.* The Original word signifieth to destroy as it were by pounding in a Morter; and the same word is used to signifie *a contrite heart, a heart broken by godly sorrow under the sense of sin. They are destroyed*, or, as it were ground to powder; you may break a thing into many pieces, yet not grinde it to powder or dust, as corn in a Mill, or spice in a Morter; but these (saith *Elihu*) are not only broken to pieces, but beaten to dust, that's the strength of the word which we render, *they are destroyed.*

דכא *contrivit, contrivit, contudit.*

Hence Note.

What God hath a mind to do, he can do it certainly, and will do it throughly.

He breaks men in pieces, *so that they are destroyed and brought to dust*; When the Prophet declares the breaking of the four Monarchies, it is said (*Dan.* 2. 35.) *They shall be as the chaffe of the Summer threshing upon the Mountains*; if the Lord will destroy the mightiest, they shall certainly be destroyed; as *Balak* said to *Balaam*; *I wot that whom thou cursest are cursed*; as if he had said, thou canst curse effectually, if thou wilt set thy self to it; 'tis not in the power of all the *Balaams* in the world to effect a curse, though they pronounce a curse, 'tis only in the power of the Lord to curse effectually; he can bless whom he pleaseth, and they are blessed; he can curse whom he pleaseth, and they are cursed. Thus as *Ephraim* lamenting his sin and sorrow confessed, (*Jer.* 31. 18.) *Lord, thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised*; God paid him home (as we speak) if we chastise a childe, he is chastised, but) when *Ephraim* saith, *thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised*; his meaning is, I was greatly and effectually chastised; that is, first, In a literal sence, I found thy hand heavie upon me, it was a sore affliction that I was under. Secondly, In a spiritual sence; *Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised*; that is, my heart was humbled and broken under thy chastisements; in either notion we see the effectualness of the Lords work; *Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised.* And therefore *Ephraim* invited the Lord to another work; *Turn me, O Lord,*

and I shall be turned; if thou wilt but turn thy Spirit upon this hard heart of mine, it will be effectually turned, it will be not only broken for sin, but from sin: As if he had said, I have received reproofs and counsels from men, and they have not turned me, but Lord, if thou wilt reprove and counsel me, I shall be turned; thus the Lord carrieth his work home to conversion, in his spiritual dealings with some, and to confusion in his temporal punishments upon others. Thus he threatned his owne people for their confidence in *Egypt*, and contempt of his holy word (*Isa*: 30. 13.) *This iniquity shall be unto you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant. And he shall breake it as the breaking of a potters vessel, that is broken in pieces, he shall not spare; so that there shall not be found in the bursting of it, a sherd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water withall out of the pit*; that is, ye shall be made utterly useless and unserviceable. That piece of a vessel is of no use, which will not serve for either of those little uses, the taking of a little fire from the hearth, or a little water out of the pit. And if God sometime breake his owne professing people thus small for their sins, how small will he breake his professed enemies! read for this the last breaking and down-fall of *Babylon* (Rev: 18. 21, 22, 23.) Therefore take heed how you fall into the Lords hand; for he can not only break you in pieces, but break you to powder, he can break you to destruction: *The Lords purposes, and the effects of them, his works, are never without effect, for good or evil, for the better or for the worse.*

JOB. Chap. 34. Vers. 26, 27, 28.

He striketh them as wicked men, in the open sight of others:

Because they turned back from him, and would not Consider any of his wayes.

So that they cause the cry of the poor to come unto him, and he heareth the cry of the afflicted.

ELihu having in the former words shewed the impartiall vengeance of God upon the wicked, proceedeth to shew two things further about it in these words.

First, The manner of it, *v.* 26. *He striketh them as wicked men in the open sight of others.*

Secondly, The causes, grounds, or reasons of it in the 27th and 28th verses; why doth God strike them? it is *because they turned back from him, and would not Consider any of his wayes*; *So that they cause the Cry of the poore to come unto him*; their impiety in turning from God, and their iniquity in oppressing the poor, provoked the Lord to *strike them as wicked men in the open sight of others.*

כפק percussit volam ad volam, adversas manus collisit. Significat aliquid cum sono dejicere vel cõplodere; unde aliqui de ejectione ignominiosa cum sibilis exponunt. Alij volunt peti metaphoram a vesica vento turgente, quæ pede compressa cum sonitu rumpitur. Sculte: Pro improbis complosit eos. Tharg: In loco improborum complodit eos. Jun:

Vers. 26. *He striketh them as wicked men.*

The word which we render *strike*, specially notes the striking of one hand against the other; our hands clasht, or struck together, make a sound, or noise: Thus some Interpret the word here, *He strikes them with an Ignominious sound.* Many rejoyce and clap their hands when they fall; They are destroyed with shouting. Others take the metaphor from a bladder filled with winde, which being cast on the ground, and stampt upon with the foot, breaks with a noise, or gives a crack in the breaking: Wicked men, in all they thinke, and purpose, and doe, are but wind, and when they break, they break like bladders, which have nothing of solidity, only breath and fume in them. Such an Elegancy there is in this word, hitting the vanity and vacuity or emptiness of wicked men,

men, all their filling being but like that of a bladder, which puffes them up, but never makes them wise or solid men.

Further, I find this word used for striking in a three-fold sense.

First, For striking with sorrow and shame; such was that of repenting *Ephraim* (Jer: 31.19.) *Who when he thought on his wayes, was ashamed and smote upon his thigh.*

Secondly, For striking with scorne and derision (*Lam:* 2. 15.) *All that passe by clap their hands at thee, they hisse and wagge their head at the daughter of Jerusalem.*

Thirdly, There is also a striking with anger and indignation; Thus *Balak* being vext, because he could not have his purpose to bribe *Balaam* to curse the people of God, *Smote his hands together* (Numb: 24. 10.) and the Lord himselfe is expreſt expressing his angry indignation against his owne people the Jewes, by this gesture (*Ezek.* 22. 13.) *Behold therefore I have smitten my hands at thy dishonest gaine*, &c. There is then a speciall Emphasis in the smiting or striking here intended, besides the generall meaning of it. The Lord destroyes wicked men in such a manner, that all who behold it are filled with the admiration of his righteousnesse, and with a detestation of their lewdnesse. The Septuagint say, *He hath Extinguished wicked men*; As if they were but smoaking firebrands, or the stinking snuffe of a candle. Another renders it, *He binds them*, the word signifying also to bind or straighten; The Lord brings forth evill men, as it were, bound hand and foot to Judgement. We say clearely, *He striketh them*, and that in no ordinary way, but

ἀσεβεῖς δὲ ἐξέβεσεν; *Extinxit autem impios.* Sept: Pro impijs strinxit eos. Bold: *i.e. vinculis funibusq; ligare fecit eos tanquam impios atq; ita sceleratos palam deduci et proponi.*

Bold: תחת *causalis est, propterea quod impij sunt. Illud quasi sæpe non similitudinem sed veritatem significat; et idem valet quod utpote, &c.*

As wicked men.

So we translate; yet the particle which we render, *as*, may (here according to its frequent use else-where) carry in it a reason, *He strikes them because they are wicked*; so some read the text, not as we by way of similitude, how God striketh them, but as giving an account why God striketh them, even because they are *wicked men.* Mr *Broughton* saith, *For the wicked he maketh plentifull riddance of them*, which hath a good sense in it, but takes somewhat too great a liberty with the original text; And because the reason of this striking is held forth in the verses following, it is more distinct to say he strikes them (not because they are wicked men, but) *as wicked men*; that is, as wicked men use to be stricken, or as they use to be proceeded against in a way of Justice. God striketh the *mighty men* (of whom he spake before) as common offenders or malefactors; Though they are great on earth, yea though they are (in title) Gods upon earth, yet God strikes them as the basest of wicked men, they shall not only *dye* (as 'tis sayd, *Psal:*. 82. 7.) *or fall like one of the Princes*, but they shall dye like the worst of men, like wicked men.

Hence note.

First, *They that doe like the wicked, shall be dealt with by God as the wicked, how high, or mighty soever they are in this world.*

And as they who are openly wicked shall be dealt with as wicked men, though they be high in the world; so they that are really wicked shall be dealt with as wicked men, though they make a high profession of godlinesse in the Church, even them will God strike also as wicked men. Christ speakes of some (*Matth:* 7.22.) who made a loud profession of religion, with whom yet he dealt as with wicked men: *Depart from me* (saith he) *I know ye not, ye workers of iniquity.* Though God doth not deal alike with all wicked men, yet he deales with them all like wicked men. There is not one wicked man in the world, but he shall be dealt with according to his kind, that is, as a wicked man, and shall have that for his portion which is the portion of their Cup, who are wicked. As the Godly, so the wicked, whether prophane or false and hypocriticall, shall be esteemed and handled by God like themselves, or as they are.

Secondly, From the first word, as it is taken causally, (upon which many insist) Note.

The reason why wicked men are stricken is because they are wicked.

Were not men wicked they should never feele such strokes from the hand or rather iron rod of God. If any smart and are ruin'd, they may thank themselves for it, that is, their sins for it; their sufferings are the fruits of their sin. The Prophet told the sinfull Jewes so (*Jer:* 4. 18.) they had an affliction upon them, which *did reach even to the heart*, God made their hearts ake, he struck them to the heart; but why did he so? the answer is,

Thy

Thy sin and thy doings have procured these things to thee, &c. He striketh them as wicked men.

In the open sight of others.

Locus videntium, locus patens frequens celebris, omnium oculis expositus. Par: *Importat visionem paradigmaticam et exemplarem.* Merc:

These words are a further description of the manner how God strikes the wicked, he doth it openly, or (as we put in the margin) *In the place of beholders*, that is, in such a place, and in such a manner that all may behold it: we say, *He strikes them in the open sight of others*; that is, he punisheth them in an exemplary way, or that they may be an example of warning unto others. For, *The place of seers*, or *of beholders*, is some open and eminent place oppos'd to a Corner; as *Paul* sayd pleading his cause before king *Agrippa* (Acts 26. 26.) *This thing was not done in a Corner*; no, it was done, as upon the house-top, even in the place of beholders. The Lord will not have to doe with wicked men only in a Corner. He will have witnesses of his doings with them. There shall be enow to take notice how he handles them, therefore he often takes open vengeance on them, in the frequent assembly and concourse of many beholders, both approving and reverencing, yea adoring the impartiall equity of the supreame Judge, and his care of humane affaires. So then, the words are an allusion to the execution of Common malefactors, who dye by the Judgement of the Magistrate, such being condemned and sentenced by the Judge, are not put to death in the prison, or in a hole, but are taken out and carried to some noted place of execution, or a Scaffold is purpotely erected, where a multitude of spectators are admitted to come and behold the Tragedy. When our Lord Jesus Christ, who (to deliver us from our transgressions) *was numbred with transgressors*, when he (I say) was crucified, The Evangelist saith (*Luke* 23. 35.) *The people stood beholding, and the Rulers also with them derided him.* Christ himselfe was strucken as a wicked man in the place of Beholders. And so have many thousands of his faithfull witnesses. The wicked deale with them often, as the Lord dealeth sometimes with wicked men, they are brought forth from prison to death, and executed in the open sight of others. *All things* (in this world) *come alike to all, no man knoweth love or hatred by all that is before them* (Eccl: 9. 1, 2.) The Apostle *Paul* speaking of himselfe and his fellow-Apostles (to shew the publick disgrace which they were put to) saith, *We are made a spectacle*

tacle to the world, to Angels, and to men (1 Cor: 4 9.) The Greeke is, we are a *Theater to the world*, &c. As if he had sayd, all see how we are used; And as bloody persecuters make the faithfull servants of Christ a spectacle, so Christ will at last make wicked men a spectacle to the world, to Angels, and to men. Thus it is prophecied (*Isa*: 66. 24.) that *all flesh who come to worship before the Lord, shall goe forth and looke upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against him*, &c. They shall be *stricken in the place of Beholders or Seers.*

Some expound that word *Seers*, as implying more then ordinary *seers*, or more then barely such as see what is done; namely, such as are delighted and pleased with what is done, yet not as it is a suffering of paine by man, but as it is an act of Justice from God. Videre *sæpe significat cum voluptate aliquid spectare.* Scult:

Hence note.

God oftentimes doth Justice upon sinners openly.

The Judgements of God are of two sorts: Some are secret, others are manifest; he can doe execution upon men when none see it; nay he doth the severest executions upon some men when they themselves doe not see it (that's the sting and severity of the Judgement, that) they have not so much as any sence of the wrath of God, when the full vialls of his wrath are powring out upon them. But many of the Judgements of God are open; As he striketh some so secretly, that none can see it, so others so visibly that all may see it. Thus the Lord commanded *Moses* (Numb: 25. 4.) when *Israel* had joyned themselves unto *Baal-peor*, *Take all the heads of the people and hang them up before the Lord against the Sun.* By *the heads of the people*, we may understand either the capitall offenders, those who were most active and ready in that wickednesse; or their principall Rulers, who in stead of stopping them from or punishing them for those offences, gave way to them or at least wincked at them: These must be hanged against the Sun, that is, as *Elihu* speakes here, *in the open sight of others*, or, *in the place of seers.* Thus they were made an example of caution that all might see and feare and doe no more presumptuously. Read the like executions of divine Judgement threatned (2 *Sam:* 12. 11, 12. *Isa.* 26. 11.) *John* in the *Revelation* (Chap: 15. 4.) prophecyeth of the Saints triumphing at the fall of *Babylon*, and singing:

ſinging the ſong of *Moſes*, and the ſong of the Lambe, ſaying, *Great and marvellous are thy workes*, &c. *for thy Judgements are made manifeſt*: God hath now ſtricken *Babylon* his great enemy in the open ſight of others; his Judgements were right before, (they are alwayes right) but till then not manifeſt. *David* ſaith (*Pſal: 9. 16.*) *The Lord is knowne by the Judgement which he executeth*: now if the Lord be knowne by the Judgement which he executeth; then the Judgement which he executeth muſt be knowne; it muſt be an open Judgement; and ſuch are very many of the Judgements of God, they are acted as upon a ſtage. And I may give you an account in three particulars why the Lord will ſometimes doe Juſtice, *in the place of beholders, or in the open ſight of others.*

Firſt, That there may be witneſſes enow of what he doth, and ſo a record of it kept, at leaſt in the minds and memories of faithfull men for the generations to come.

Secondly, The Lord doth it not onely that he may have witneſſes of his Juſtice, but alſo that his Juſtice and the proceedings of it, may have an effect and a fruit upon thoſe who did not feele it, nor fall under it. This was the reaſon why the Lord threatned to puniſh *Jeruſalem* in the ſight of the nations (*Ezek:* 5. 5, 6, 7, 8, 14, 15.) *Thus ſaith the Lord God, this is Jeruſalem, I have ſet it in the midſt of the nations and Countryes that are round about her.* God is ſayd (*Pſal: 74. 12.*) *To work ſalvation in the midſt of the Earth*; that is, in *Jeruſalem*, or among his people, who were placed as it were in the Center, and middle part of the world: not that *Jeruſalem* ſtood exactly in the midſt of the world, but becauſe many Nations ſtood about it, that might well be called a City ſtanding in the midſt of the nations; and therefore it is added (*v.* 8.) *Thus ſaith the Lord God, Behold I, even I am againſt thee, and will execute Judgement in the midſt of thee, in the ſight of the nations.* God would execute Judgement in *Jeruſalem* a City placed in the midſt of the nations, that as the nations had taken notice of the extraordinary favours, benefits, deliverances, and ſalvations which God wrought for *Jeruſalem*; ſo they might alſo take notice of his judgements and ſore diſpleaſure againſt them. *Jeruſalem* was not ſeated in ſome nooke, corner, or by-place of the world, but in the midſt of the nations, that both the goodneſſe and ſeverity of God towards them might be conſpicuous; and that the

Jeruſalem dicitur medium terræ, utpote quæ ſit in quarto climate ideo autem urbem in medio mundi conſtitutam et quaſi in loco eminentiori elegit deus, ut ſicut beneficia ita et ſupplicia eorum omnibus eſſent conſpicua. Pined:

the nations round about ſeeing the ſufferings of that people for their ſin, might feare and tremble to ſin as they had done; for if *Jeruſalem* the ſeate of inſtituted worſhip and Gods peculiar people were not ſpared when they provoked God, their neighbours might well conclude, ſurely we ſhall not be ſpared: As the Lord himſelfe argued it againſt thoſe uncircumcited nations (*Jer:* 25. 20.) *Behold I will bring evill upon the City that is called by my name, and ſhould ye goe utterly unpuniſhed?* Certainly no! If God puniſh his own people in the ſight of the heatheniſh nations when they doe wickedly, what then are heathen nations to expect, who doe nothing but wickedneſſe?

And this (by the way) may give the Alarme, and be a very awakening conſideration to all the Churches and people of God at this day throughout the world. If God did ſtrike *Jeruſalem* of old, that is, his people there, *as wicked men* even in the open ſight of others; if the Lord was ſo *wroth with his people, that he polluted his inheritance, and gave them into the hand of the Chaldeans* (Iſa. 47. 6.) *If he forſooke his houſe and left his heritage, and gave the dearely beloved of his ſoule into the hands of her enemies* (Jer: 12. 7.) and ſayd (*v.* 9.) *Mine heritage is to me as a ſpeckled bird, the birds round about her are againſt her*; yea if he (in the cloſe of that verſe) invited the worſt of men under the name of beaſts to ſpoyle them, *Come ye, aſſemble all the beaſts of the field come to devoure*; Now (I ſay) If God ſtruck his ancient people, the Jewiſh Church, as wicked men, by wicked men, in the open ſight of others, O let the Gentile Churches take heed, leſt they alſo be ſtricken after the ſame manner. Many Churches in *Germany* and elſe-where have been ſtricken ſo already in this laſt age, let the remnant both there and elſe-where remember themſelves and give glory to God, before he cauſe ſuch darkneſſe to come upon them, and ſtrike them alſo *as wicked men in the open ſight of others.*

God lets ſome ſinners ſuffer or puniſheth them openly, both becauſe he would have all others take notice that he diſlikes what they have done, as alſo becauſe he would not have others doe the like, leſt they be made like them, both in the matter and manner of their ſufferings. *'Tis a favour (as well as our duty) to be taught by other mens harmes; and to be inſtructed by their ſtroakes, to prevent our own.*

And as the Lord ſtrikes ſome wicked men openly, that others

may feare and not doe the like, so, that they who have done the like may be humbled for, and repent of what they have done. God doth not alwayes powre out the same Judgements upon all those that have done the same wickedness, (the whole world would be in blood if he did so) but he takes here and there one that the rest bethinking themselves, and (with repenting *Ephraim*) smiting upon their thigh, may prevent the Lord from smiting them at all, especially from striking them as wicked men in the open sight of others. It is sayd (*Rev:* 11. 13.) *that, after by a great earth-quake the tenth part of the City fell, and in the earth-quake were slaine of men seven thousand, the remnant were affrighted and gave glory to the God of heaven.* And surely the reason why after one man hath been chastised or stricken, others take their turnes too, is because they did not take warning by his chastisements and sufferings. Did we but mind the scope of God in punishing any openly, the striking of one might save hundreds, or thousands from being stricken; but because men are so secure and so slow to take warning by what God doth to others, therefore they are called forth one after another, to suffer and feel his heavy hand in their own persons.

Thirdly, God strikes some wicked men in open view, or in the place of beholders for the comfort of his own people, and for their encouragement (*Psal:* 58. 10, 11.) *The righteous shall be glad when he seeth the vengeance*; not that he shall be glad of the vengeance, purely as it is a hurt, or a suffering to the creature, but the righteous shall be glad when he seeth the vengeance of God, as it is a fulfilling of the threatning of God against the sin of man, and an evidence of his own holiness. (*Psal:* 64. 9, 10.) *God shall shoot suddenly at the wicked, all that see them shall flee away*; that is, they that see how God deales with them, shall get away, least ruine overtake them, or they shall flee away (which is their best course) from such courses and practices as procured them that ruine. Thus the righteous rejoyce when they see the vengeance, yea *they wash their feete in the blood of the ungodly*; that is, they get comfort and encouragement by seeing the Lord avenge their cause against their adversaries. It is sayd (*Exod:* 14. 30, 31.) that God having overwhelmed the *Egyptians* in the red Sea, *the Israelites saw the Egyptians dead upon the shoar*; God did not suffer the carcasses of the *Egyptians* to sink to the bottom of the Sea, but caused them to lie upon the shoar, that the *Israelites* might see them: And when *Israel* saw that dreadfull stroak of the Lord upon the *Egyptians*, It is sayd, *The people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord and his servant Moses*: Thus they were confirmed in their faith by Gods open Judgements upon the *Egyptians*; They were smitten *in the place of beholders, or in the open sight of others.*

There are yet two other interpretations of these words, which I shall touch.

He striketh them in the *place of beholders*, that is (saith my Author) in such an estate or condition wherein themselves might see, both by that natural light which every man hath, & especially by the light of doctrine and instruction, what they ought to doe, and what to shun or avoyd. In this sense to be smitten in the place of Seers, is, to see and behold, to have light and understanding what to doe, or forbeare doing, and yet to act against that light, and so provoke the Lord to strike us; which is a great aggravation both of the sin, and punishment of man.

In loco videntium. i. e. exilentes in statu in quo videre poterant tum per naturalem rationem tum per sacram doctrinam quid esset faciendum et quid esset vitandum. Aquin:

A second gives it thus, *He striketh them in the place of seers*, or where they saw; that is, he striketh them in the eye of their understanding, or in their Judgement, he striketh them with spirituall blindness, as the *Sodomites* were with corporall, so that they are not able to see their way, or what becomes them to doe. This is a most severe stroake. There are many who when they have abused the light, and would not doe what they saw they ought, God hath struck them with such blindness, that they should not see what they ought to doe. Both these are rather tropologicall Expositions then literall, yet they may have their use and improvement by way of allusion. In this place *Elihu* having thus held out the openness and exemplarines of the judgements of God upon wicked men, proceeds in the following words, to shew the equity and righteousnesse of them.

Vers. 27. *Because they have turned back from him, and would not Consider any of his wayes.*

Here, I say, lest any should surmise that God takes vengeance without cause, the cause is named and assigned why God takes vengeance; 'tis *because they turned back from him*, they in the pride

and ſtoutneſſe of their hearts (which great men eſpecially are much ſubject to) refuſed to obey and follow God, and therefore his wrath followed and brake them.

They turned back from him.

אחרין *Verbum è verbo; de poſt eum ſic alibi, ſcorta ſunt, de poſt dominum.* i. e. *deſerto domino.*

There is a two-fold turning back; Firſt, Corporall; Secondly, Morall or ſpirituall, none can corporally turn back from God, though ſome attempt it; to what hiding place ſoever we turn our ſelves, we cannot be hid from him who filleth every place? But there are many who morally turn back and depart from the living God. Sinners would turn their perſons back from God, and hide their heads, they would get quite out of his ſight and reach, though they cannot; but all of them turn back from God in their hearts.

In two reſpects ſinners in generall, may be ſayd to turne back from God; Firſt, when he commands and they will not obey him, or withdraw their obedience from his commandements; Secondly, when he entreates and invites them, and they will not come to him, nor accept his tendered reſpects and favours. Thus the Lord complained of his owne people (*Pſal:* 81. 11.) *Iſrael would none of me*; God wooed them, but they had other lovers, and after them they would goe; even *Iſrael* lightly regarded the God of *Iſrael*, yea they made a defection from him. More diſtinctly.

There is a three-fold turning back from God, or they who turne back from God are of three ſorts.

Firſt, There is a turning back from God, by thoſe who have openly followed him, or made profeſſion of his name; Thus hypocrites and formaliſts turne back from God. This the Scripture calls back-ſliding, revolting, and going a whoring from God. Such as theſe, are like perfidious Souldiers, who enter and liſt themſelves in an Army, marching with them for a while, & taking their pay, yet ſoon after forſake their colours, and turn to the enemy: Thus many apoſtatize from God to the Devill, and to the creature, or (as *Paul* ſayd of *Demas*) *they forſake Chriſt and embrace this preſent world*. *Luther* was charged by his enemies that he was an Apoſtate, and he acknowledged, he was, but he thanked God for it, he indeed turned back from what he did once profeſſe, but it was to a better profeſſion; he did not turne from God to the world, but he turned from the world to God, and that's a bleſſed

bleſſed Apoſtacy; he did not turn from truth to error, but from error to truth; he did not turn from pure worſhip to Idolatry and ſuperſtition, but from Idolatry and ſuperſtition to pure worſhip. How wretched is their condition who are indeed Apoſtates! who turn from God to the world, from truth to error, from pure worſhip to Idolatry and ſuperſtition, from a holy converſation to prophaneſs, looſeneſs and libertiniſme, to a complyance with the world, and a ſymbolizing with them in their luſts and wickedneſſe. This abominable apoſtacy is a fruit of hypocriſie, *Hypocrites turne only their faces to God, and Apoſtates turne their backes upon him*, or, *turn back from him*. And all they *who turn only their faces unto God, will for their owne advantage, or to ſave themſelves turn their backs upon him. Hypocrites when put to it, when the ſtorme comes, ever prove Apoſtates.*

Secondly, There is a turning from God found even in the beſt followers of God; who is there among the Saints on earth that keepes conſtant un-interrupted communion with God? The leaſt degree of inordinate letting downe or turning the heart to the creature, is, a degree of turning back from God. As holineſs is our motion toward God, and to act holily is to keep the eye of the ſoule alwayes upon God; ſo, unholineſs, is an averſion from God. *David* did not ſay, nor could he ſay (though as holy a man as lived) that he had never turned from God; he could only ſay that he had not *wickedly departed from God* (Pſal: 18. 21.)

Thirdly, There is a turning back from God, proper to all unregenerate perſons, whether they be ſuch as are civilly honeſt and poſſibly ſuch as doe not decline the outſide of that religion wherein they were borne and bred; or ſuch as are flagitious in their lives and wayes, ſcorning to own religion, and being even aſhamed of the wayes of God. Theſe may be ſayd *to turn back from God*, becauſe they have many calls to God, and are invited to come unto him; which yet they either neglect and mind not at all, or refuſe and reject, and ſo thruſt away God from them; and when the light comes, they *love darkneſs rather then light, becauſe their deeds are evill* (Joh: 3. 19) Such were they of whom *Job* ſpake (*Chap:* 21. 14.) *They ſay to God depart from us*: he doth not intend it of Apoſtates in a ſtrict notion, who once made profeſſion of godlineſs; but he ſpeakes of common and prophane perſons, who have no mind at all to obey or walk with God, but

mind

mind only the fullfilling of their luſts, or the affayres of this preſent life; and ſo their whole life is nothing elſe but a turning from God. Thus the vulgar tranſlation renders the text with a good ſignificancy, though not with a cléarneſs to the Hebrew; *who have purpoſely turned from God*; diſtinguiſhing them from thoſe who through dayly Infirmity turn from God, as the beſt of his people do; whereas, theſe ſin willingly, yea wilfully and reſolvedly againſt God. I conceive, the words of *Elihu* in this text are to be underſtood of turning from God in this third ſence; For he is not here ſpeaking of thoſe who were eminent profeſſors before, and did Apoſtatize; much leſs of thoſe that turn from God by dayly failings in duty, or ſome neglect of duty; but he is ſpeaking of ſuch, whoſe whole courſe of life is as a continued turning from God, themſelves never having been wrought upon by the grace of converſion, or ſavingly turned to him. This third ſort of turners back from God are moſt proper to the preſent text, though ſuch alſo are within the reach and compaſſe of it, who doe wickedly after they have made faire pretenſions to the beſt things. This is the reaſon why God ſtriketh the mighty to deſtruction; *They have turned back from God.* The reaſon being thus explicite and expreſſe, teacheth us,

Qui quaſi à inauſtria receſſerunt ab eo vulg: ſc: a deo peccantes ex certa malitia. Aquin:

Firſt.

God never puniſheth any man without cauſe.

God doth not alwayes ſhew the cauſe why he puniſheth this or that man, but he never puniſheth any man without cauſe; if he ſtriketh, 'tis becauſe men turn back from him, either by a plain apoſtacy from what they once profeſſed, or by a notorious courſe of impiety, refuſing ſo much as to own his wayes or make profeſſion. God electeth ſome, and paſſeth by others without reſpect to any thing in them; *Jacob have I loved, and Eſau have I hated; God hath mercy on whom he will have mercy* (Rom: 9. 13, 15.) thus, I ſay, God electeth us without reſpect to any good in us; but God never ſtriketh or puniſheth us, but with reſpect to ſome evill in us or done by us.

Secondly, Note.

It is the duty of all men to follow after God.

To follow God in his way, and to propoſe God as our end, containe

taine the ſumme of all duty. That, God hath made man and given him a being, that, he placed man in the higheſt forme of his viſible creation, ſhould draw man after him. We ought to follow God becauſe we are his creatures, becauſe we have our all from him, or becauſe *in him we live, and move, and have our being*, as the Apoſtle ſpeakes of mankind in generall, even of the heathens (*Acts* 17. 28.) And foraſmuch as *we are his off-ſpring* (*v.* 29.) our hearts ſhould ſpring, or riſe up to him in love and thankfullneſs; as the rivers, becauſe they come from the Sea, goe back thither: ſo we being the off-ſpring of God, and derived from him, ſhould be alwayes returning to him. This nature tells us; And therefore the Apoſtle ſaith (*Acts* 17. 27.) *God hath made of one blood all nations of men, that they ſhould ſeek after him, &c.* The light of nature, though dim and dark, ſhews that a man ſhould feele after God, as a man in the dark doth after his way. And if all men ought to follow God, becauſe they have their naturall life and breath from him; much more ſhould believers, who have a new, a ſpirituall life breathed into them, and beſtowed upon them, be alwayes following after God; And the truth is, where true faith, or the life of grace is, that ſoule cannot live without dayly returnings back to and breathings after God, even as meere carnal men, who are alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, are dayly turning back from him.

Hence thirdly, Note.

The whole life of every unconverted ſoule, and notorious ſinner, is a turning from God.

They who ſet their faces ſin-ward, turn their backs God-ward. They who purſue their luſts, their covetous, their ambitious purpoſes, they who gratifie the fleſh, their pride, their luxury, their wantonneſs, their malice, what doe any of them, what doe all of them, but turn back from God? The beſt of Saints have their turnings from God, but they doe not make it their buſineſs to turn from him; their buſineſs is, to draw near, to keep cloſe to God, to keep as it were in his eye; but as for the naturall man and groſs ſinner, his buſineſs is a departing from God (*Heb:* 3. 12.) *Take heed* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *leſt there be in any of you an evill heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.* He gives Caution

tion to the Church, ſearch your ſelves, leſt there be found in any of you an evill heart of unbelief, *&c.* Where unbelief remaines in any meaſure unmortified, it may quickly doe a great deale of miſchiefe. And where it remaines in full power or altogether unmortified, it doth all manner of miſchiefe. All which is wrapt up in that one word, *a departure from the living God.* Unbelief is the root of Apoſtacy; The reaſon why ſinners turn from God, is, becauſe they give no Credit to the word of God; they are not perſwaded God is ſuch a one as he hath declared himſelfe to be, and will either doe that for the obedient which he hath promiſed, or that againſt the rebellious which he hath threatned. They who believe not in God cannot but depart from God; And therefore the life of an unbeliever is a continuall departure from God. He ſets out with his back upon God; the very firſt ſtep he takes into the world is from God. As ſoon as we are borne we naturally goe aſtray ſpeaking lyes; we are ever out of our way, till we look toward God, and ayme at him; which we never doe, till he by his mighty power changeth our hearts, turneth our courſe, and bringeth us home to himſelfe.

Further, Conſider, how did theſe mighty men turn back from God? they might ſay, where did we ſee God? where did God appeare to us? that we are thus charged with turning back from him?

I anſwer; Firſt, God manifeſts himſelfe to man in his workes, or in his providences. Secondly, He manifeſts himſelfe in every part of his word, eſpecially in his Commands, in his promiſes, and in his threatenings; in his Commands, he manifeſts himſelfe a holy God; in his promiſes, a gracious and bountifull God; in his threatenings, a juſt and righteous God, who will neither do wrong nor ſuffer himſelfe to be wronged. The Septuagint make this Expoſition the text, tranſlating theſe words of *Elihu*, thus; *Becauſe they have turned from the Law of God.*

ὅτι ἐξέκλιναν ἐκ νόμου θεοῦ. *Quia declinaverunt de lege dei.* Sept:

Hence note.

They who turn from the word of God, turn back from God.

When a Command comes, if you ſlight the authority and obligation of it, you turn back from God; when a promiſe comes, if you doe not believe the truth of it, and hope for the good of it, you turn back from God; look what of the mind of God is manifeſted

feſted to you in the diſpenſation of the word, if you doe not obedientially cloſe with it, you neglect to cloſe with God himſelfe, and while you turn from it, you turn from God himſelfe. Thus the Apoſtle ſpeakes concerning back-ſliders (2 *Pet:* 2. 20, 21.) *If after they have eſcaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt they are againe entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worſe with them then the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have knowne the way of God, then after they have knowne it, to turn from the holy commandement delivered unto them*; ſo that, a turning from the Commandement of God, is a turning from God himſelfe; He turneth back from the holy commanding God, who turneth back from the holy commandement of God, and he turneth back from the God of the promiſe, who turneth back from the promiſe of God.

Fifthly, Note.

As it is exceeding ſinfull to turn back from God, ſo they who doe ſo, grow every day more and more ſinfull.

If a man be once upon a courſe of back-ſliding and Apoſtatizing from the commands and promiſes of God, he will find himſelfe worſe and worſe day after day; for ſtill the further from God any man goeth, the more vaine he groweth; and the more doth luſt get a hand over him. As unbeliefe is the roote of Apoſtacy from God, ſo Apoſtacy encreaſeth all that wickedneſſe which is in man. As the cauſe of all evill, whether of puniſhment or of ſin, is our departure and turning from God; ſo the very nature of ſin is a turning from God; and therefore the more we turne from God, the more ſinfull and the fuller of ſin we are. As the neerer we come to God, the more holy and ſpirituall and heavenly we are (*while we with open face as in a glaſſe* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor:* 3. 18.) *Behold the glory of God* (that is, while we draw neere to him in his holy ordinances) *we are changed into the ſame image*, that is, we become more like to God) ſo the more we keep at a diſtance from God, the more unlike we are to him, that is, the more unholy we are. And as perſons unconverted, or in an unholy ſtate, are wholly alienated from the life of God, and cannot endure to come neere him; ſo it is in a degree by any of our withdrawings or turnings from him: we are made more unholy,

and are changed more into the image of those carnal and earthly things which we behold, and with which we over-intimately converse in the time of those withdrawings.

Lastly, Note.

A holy life consists in following of and keeping close to God.

To keep close to God is both a holy and a comfortable life; 'Tis the perfection of Saints to walk with God: *Enoch* walked with God, and that was his holiness (*Gen.* 5. 24.) *Caleb* followed God fully, and that was his holiness. A spirituall life, is nothing else but our following God. *The most religious worship of God is to imitate whom we worship.* And our imitation of God is our following of God, no man can imitate any thing but when his eye is upon its pattern, or the Idea of it abides in his mind. And therefore it is sayd of the ungodly man (*Psal.* 10. 4.) *God is not in all his thoughts* (then followeth, *v.* 5.) *his wayes are always grievous.* If God be not in the thoughts of a man, nothing of God is stampt upon the wayes of that man. In vaine are we called Christians, unless we keep close to Christ, and in vaine doe any pretend to godliness, unless they walke with God. Jesus Christ hath called himselfe *the way* (Joh 14. 6.) chiefly upon this account, because by him we goe to the Father, and have acceptance with God by the grace of Justification; but Jesus Christ is the way also, of our Sanctification; we must walke in him, and as he walked (1 *Joh.* 2. 6.) that we may be holy: every departure from God lets the heart loose to sin. That which shall maintaine the Saints holiness to Eternity, is, *They shall always behold the face of God*; they shall never turn back from God, they shall never be taken off one moment from the actuall vision, enjoyment and contemplation of God in glory; therefore they shall never be taken off from actuall holiness and purity, now in proportion, as we keep our hearts and spirits steady upon God, and doe not turn back from him, such is our holiness in this life; and as our holiness is, such will our comfort and peace and joy be in this life. For as because when we arrive at glory, we shall never turn back from God, much less turn our back's upon him, therefore in glory there is fullness of Joy, and pleasure for evermore; so the neerer we keep to God, and the closer we walke with him in this life, the fuller and more lasting will our joyes and pleasures be.

Optima vivendi ratio est deum sequi. Religiosissimus dei cultus est imitari quem colis. Lact: lib: 5. Instit: cap: 10.

As

As in this former part of the 27th verse, we have had the first cause opened why God striketh the mighty as wicked men in the open sight of others, namely, their apostacy from God, *Because they turned back from him.* So in the latter part of this verse we have another reason assigned why God doth it, and that is, because

They would not Consider any of his wayes.

The word which we render *Consider*, signifies also to *understand* or *know*, which is an act precedent to consideration; Consideration is a contemplative act; by consideration we become more knowing, but we cannot consider any thing till we have some understanding or knowledge of it. And this word is often (in another Conjugation) used in the title of some speciall Psalmes. The 32d Psalme, as also the 42d Psalme, is called *Maschil*, as much as to say, *a teaching, or an instructing Psalme, a Psalme giving understanding and requiring deep and serious consideration.* Thus in the text, they would *not consider, nor understand, nor know, nor contemplate*

שכל *intellexit cognovit contemplatus est. Hinc* Maschil, *carmen eruditionis ode didascalica,* Tit: Psal: 32.

any of his wayes.

The Hebrew is, *all his wayes*; that is, none at all of them. The wayes of God in Scripture are taken in a two-fold notion; First, for those wherein he would have us walk; such are the wayes of his commandements: they are called the wayes of God, because he directs us to walke in them. A holy life consists in our walking with God, and we cannot walke with God any further, or any longer, then we keep in the wayes of his commandements. It is sayd of the children of *Israel*, after the death of *Joshua* (*Judg.* 2. 17.) *they turned quickly out of the way, which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandements of the Lord*; *but they did not so.* To obey the commandements, is to walke in the way of them. Taking the wayes of God in this sence, when *Elihu* saith, *They would not consider any of his wayes*, his meaning is, they did not intend nor had any heart to set themselves to learne the mind of God revealed in his word concerning their duty, or what they ought to doe; they know not the wayes of God practically. The word properly denotes the wisdome and prudence, which stayeth not in notion, but proceeds to action. These men lived as if they had

שכל *ad prudentiam & sapientiam practicam rerum agendarum pertinet.*

had never heard of, at least never understood the Law of God, which is the rule of life. They considered not the wayes of God to walke in them, as *Moses* exhorted the people of *Israel* (Deut. 29. 9.) *Keep therefore the words of this covenant to doe them.*

Secondly, The wayes of God are those wherein himself walketh, the works of God are the wayes of God; the works of his providence either in mercy or in judgement, either in doing good or in doing evil (that is, penal evil) these are the wayes of God; in these God shewes himself as in a way, in these he goeth forth in his power and goodness, in his mercy and justice. All these divine glories and perfections are discovered in the works of God. Thus *David* is to be understood when he saith (*Psal.* 25. 10.) *All the wayes of God are mercy and truth, to them that fear him, and keep his Covenant*; that is, all the providential works of God are mercy and truth; though all of them are not mercy in the matter, or precisely taken as works done, though none of them are mercy, respecting some persons to whom they are done, for many of them are materially chastisements, afflictions, and crosses to good men, and all of them are wrath and judgement to evil and impenitently wicked men; yet they are all mercy in the issue or result of them to good men, or to those who fear God, and keep his covenants. For whether he do good, or whether he do evil, whether he wounds, or whether he heals, all these providential wayes of God, are as truth in themselves, so mercy to his people; or, as the Apostle concludes (*Rom.* 8. 28.) *They work together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to his purpose.* In both these senses we may expound this Text, *They would not consider any of his wayes*; that is, they would neither consider the Lawes of God, which were the way wherein they should walk towards him, nor would they consider the works of God, which are the wayes wherein himself walketh towards them. This was the spirit of that evil generation intended in this Scripture; they had not much understanding in, and less consideration of the wayes of God.

Hence, first we may take notice, *Elihu* doth not say, *they did not consider his wayes*; but, *they would not*; It was not so much an act of carelesness and negligence as of contempt and rebellious resolution.

Hence

Hence Observe.

Evil men have no will to consider or understand the good wayes of God; yea, their will is against such an understanding.

A natural man *liketh not to retain God in his knowledge*, (Rom. 1. 28.) Now, he that doth not like to retain God in his knowledge, or had rather think of any thing then of God, he can never (while such) like to retain the wayes of God in his knowledge; he that layeth God out of his thoughts, will much more lay the law of God out of his thoughts. The natural man hath not only a blindness in his minde, which hinders him from discerning the things of God, (they being discernable only by a spiritual eye) but he hath an obstinacy in his Will; or, he hath not only an inability to know, but an enmity against the knowledge of that which is spiritual: He shuts his eyes, and draws a curtain between himself and the light which is ready to dart in upon him; *away with this light*, saith he; Thus he rebelleth against the light, and as his understanding is dark, so his affections are corrupt. *Solomon* gives us all this in the expostulations of wisdome with wicked men, (*Prov.* 1. 20, 21, 22.) *Wisdome cryeth*, &c. *How long ye simple ones will ye love simplicity, and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?* That which a man hateth, he hath no will, no minde to know. An impotency or inability unto God, argues a very sad condition, but a rebellion, a frowardness, a wilfulness against it, demonstrates a condition much more sad; not to know because we have no means of knowledge, will make us miserable enough, but not to know because unwilling to receive, or because wilfully set against the means of knowledge, renders any mans condition most miserable. Such were these in the Text, *They would not consider any of his wayes.*

Secondly, *Elihu* saith not, *they did not know any of his wayes*, or they knew not which way to go; but they would not consider them. There is no man but knowes some, yea many of the ways of God, that is, of those wayes wherein God would have him to walk; these wayes of God are written in the heart by nature; there is an impression of the Will of God upon every soul, though not such an impression or writing as grace maketh there (that's another kinde or manner of work) for, when once through grace the Law of God is written in, and impressed upon the heart, then the heart

heart is suited to the Law, yea, the heart is not only conformed unto, but transformed into the Law of God, whereas by nature the Law is written only so far as to give us the knowledge of the Law, and a conviction of that duty or conformity which we owe to it. The men here intended by *Elihu*, knew the Law or wayes of God, by the light of a natural conscience, but not by the light of a renewed conscience, and therefore they *would not consider any of his wayes*, which is a farther description of the heart of man in a state of Nature.

Hence Note.

That which a natural man knoweth of the will of God, he will not consider, unless it be to reject and turn from it.

I (saith Wisdome, *Prov.* 1. 24, 25.) *have stretched out my hand*, (as a Teacher doth to his hearers or disciples) *and no man*, (that is, no meer natural man) *regarded, they set at nought my counsel, and would none of my reproof.* Let me say what I would, they would at most but give me the hearing, they would not consider it; though the light shined in upon them, and they could not chuse but see something, yet they would not sit down and rowl it in their thoughts, and work it upon their hearts, to finde out the excellency of what they saw. It is a very great measure of sinfulnes not to know the wayes of God, but not to consider what we know, but lightly to pass it by, that is a greater measure of sinfulnes.

Thirdly, comparing this assertion concerning wicked men, *they would not consider any of his wayes*, with their practice in the former part of the verse, *they turned back from God*, and with the effect of it in the verse following, *they made the cry of the poor to come up to him*, &c.

Observe.

The reason why men are so wicked, and act so wickedly, is, because they minde not the Word of God.

They who consider not the rule of the Word, are far both from righteousnes towards man, and holiness towards God. If once a man throw aside the Word of God, where will he stay? He will neither abide in any wayes of holiness, nor will he abide in any wayes of righteousnes; they cannot make conscience of the wayes of God, who will not consider the wayes of God. We have this clear character of a wicked man, (*Psal.* 36.) he is one that will possibly

possibly take the covenant of God in his mouth, he will be talking of it, his tongue may be tipt with it, but (*vers.* 17.) *he hateth instruction, and casteth the words of God behinde his back.* He that would consider a thing, holds it before his eye, and keeps it, as much as he can in sight; therefore the Lord, when he would assure Zion how much he did consider her case, though she had said a little before, *God hath forsaken me, and my God hath forgotten me*, yet presently the Lord saith, (*Isa.* 49. 15, 16.) *Can a woman forget her sucking childe, that she should not have compassion on the son of her wombe? Yea, they may, yet will not I forget thee*; (what follows?) *Behold I have graven thee upon the Palms of my hands, thy walls are continually before me.* As if the Lord had said, you may be sure I will consider your case, for I have you here pourtrayed upon the palms of my hands, and am alwayes viewing your walls, either as ruin'd and demolished, to move me to pity, or in that strong & beautiful model according to which I purpose to raise them up again, or re-build them. Thus I say, both God and man intending to consider any thing, have it alwayes before them; but what a man hath no minde to consider, he casts it behinde his back; *thou castest my words behinde thy back*, saith God to the hypocrite, and when once the hypocrite hath got the word behinde him, then he is ready for any wickedness (*vers.* 18, 19, 20.) *When thou sawest a thief, thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with the adulterer*, &c. Whence was all this? he had cast the word behinde his back. It is *David's* question, (*Psal.* 119. 6.) *Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?* The answer is, *By taking heed thereto according to thy word*; that is, by continual eying of the word, and of his way, and by comparing them together. They that will make right work, must be alwayes eying the rule; if once you lay by the rule, you will make but crooked, or bungling work: When the rule of righteousnes is laid by, righteousnes is laid by too. These mighty men of whom *Elihu* speaketh would not consider any the holy wayes of God, and you see what ill favour'd work they made, what foul wayes they walked in.

Fourthly, The Text doth not say they would not consider some, or such and such of his wayes, but *any of his wayes.*

Hence Note.

A wicked man liketh, delighteth in, or loveth one way of God better or more then another. He

He is as much out with all as with any, they are all alike to him, that is, he likes none of them; *they would not consider any of his wayes*: He that hateth one truth of God, hateth all truth, though possibly his hatred is not called out or acted against some truths; and he that hateth one law of God, hateth all his laws, though possibly his lusts are not drawn out against some of them. The reason why the Apostle *James* saith, (*chap.* 2. 10.) *Whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all*, is, because if a man hath a minde to sin against one branch of the law, that evil principle will carry him to sin against any branch of it: If he be not stopt from without, he findes no stop within against the worst of sins, as it is a sin.

Fifthly, We translate *any*, the Original word is [*all*] his ways, which imports a refusing of every one of his wayes; there are several Scriptures of a like sence (*Psal.* 103. 1, 2.) *O praise the Lord, and forget not all his benefits*; that is, forget not any one of his benefits; not that a man shall be excused, though he forget many of the benefits of God, or half his benefits, if so be he forget not all, or remember some: but when that Scripture saith, *forget not all his benefits*, the meaning is, forget not any one at all. Thus here, *they considered not all his wayes*, (that's the letter of the Text, and so Mr *Broughton* translates,) that is, none of them. Taking that reading, and the Scripture sence given of it, it gives us this useful Observation.

That unless all the wayes of God be considered and obeyed, there is not any one of them considered or obeyed.

God will not be obeyed by halves; he must have entire obedience, universal obedience, or he owneth none; there is a band or tye between all the commandments of God, and unless you keep them all, you break them all; they that submit not to all, submit to none of his laws. It is not enough for a man to say he is no adulterer, if he be a thief; or to say he is not a murderer, if he bears false witness. He that doth the one in act, doth the other in his heart; nothing hinders him but the absence of a temptation, or of an opportunity, the Law doth not.

Further, [*they*] *would not consider any of his wayes*. Who were they? No fools I dare say, either in their own opinion, or in the opinion of men. Doubtless those mighty men spoken of by *Elihu*, were worldly wise men; they were the mighty, the great men of the world, and they are commonly very considering men, as well as very considerable men; they are knowing men, as well as men much known; they are men of counsel, and sit in councel to debate difficult matters, and of greatest outward concernment; these things they could consider exactly, and weigh them to a grain; but they would not consider any of God's wayes.

Hence Note.

There is nothing so little regarded by ungodly men, as the wayes of God are.

Though they have wisdome and ability to understand and consider earthly things, yet they will bestow none of it upon the things of heaven. Christ rebuked *Martha* when he saw her so busie about worldly business, (*Luke* 10. 41.) *Martha, Martha, thou art* careful and *troubled about many things, one thing is needful*; *Martha* had some care about the one thing needful, but because not so much as she should, Christ gave her a gracious check and reproof for it: How much more may Christ come and rebuke the men of the world, ye are careful about many things, ye are wise considering men about your profits and preferments, those ye can think of all night long; but there is one thing needful, my wayes, my word, my commandments are to be considered, what account can ye give of or concerning them?

Farther, this *non-consideration* of the wayes of God is brought as a charge, as a high charge against those mighty men; not only were they bad men who did not consider the wayes of God, but this was a part, yea I may say the whole of their badness, that they did not consider the wayes of God.

Hence Note.

Not to consider the wayes of God, is in it self a very great sin.

The omission, or non-performance of what is good, is as sinful as the commission or doing of that which is evil. Not to do good is to do evil; especially when it is the not doing of such a good duty as opens a way to the doing of all evil. Should we suppose a man not chargeable with the breaking of any commandment of God, yet if we could charge him that he did not consider the commandments of God, this were the breaking of all the commandments.

mandments. For as they are all to be considered that we may keep them, so if we consider them not, we cannot keep them. 'Tis the description of a godly man, (*Psal.* 1. 2.) *His delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in his Law doth he meditate day and night.* Meditation is nothing else but consideration. A godly man meditates or considers day and night what the Law or Word of God is; not that he thinks of nothing else but the Law of God day and night, for then he must throw off his Calling; but the meaning is this, he is very sedulous and watchful of all opportunities both night and day, to get and keep his heart up in holy meditation; and why is he so much in holy meditation? 'Tis surely, that he may be much, yea alwayes in holy action; and when it may be said of a man, that his meditation is not in the Law of God, neither day nor night, or that he never considers the wayes of God, this is an undeniable evidence that he neither keeps in the way, or observes any one line or letter of the Law at any time. It is our sin, and that no small one, not to consider our own wayes, how much more is it sinful not to consider the wayes of God! To consider our own wayes, is a great part of our work: If we consider not our own wayes, they will soon be crooked wayes. The Prophet adviseth the Jewes, (*Hag.* 1. 5.) *Consider your wayes*; the Text is, *Set your heart upon your wayes*; that is, ponder your wayes; as if he had said, the reason why your feet are so often in bad wayes, is, because your hearts are so seldome upon your wayes. Now, if not to consider our own wayes be so sinful, and subjects us to every sin, then much more is it sinful not to consider the wayes, the word and truths of God, and much more doth the neglect of this lead or lay us open and obnoxious to every sin. This neglect is not only a special sin in it self, and an effect of sin, but the general cause of all other sins: What sin is not, or may not be found in the wayes of those men, who consider not the wayes of God?

Lastly Observe.

Sin makes men stupid, and transforms them into fools.

He that is not a considering man, is a weak and a foolish man; every wise man is a considering man; and the more a man is versed in consideration, the more wise he is, and the wiser he grows. The wicked man is often called a fool in Scripture, and he deserves

serves no better a title; when he is called so, he is both served and called in his kinde (*Psal.* 14. 1.) *The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God.* The thoughts of the heart are the sayings of the heart; and sin hath made a wicked man so much a fool, that as he knowes not how to say any thing of God, which is honourable, with his tongue, so all that his heart can say, that is, think of God, is, that God is not; which as it is the highest blasphemy, so the deepest piece of folly and irrationallity that ever was hatcht in the heart of man. Sin makes dull-heads, it stupifies the soul; sinners consider not that, at any time, which is their interest as much as their duty to consider of at all times, the wayes of God, as taken for the wayes wherein man ought to walk towards God.

Again, If we take the wayes of God in the second notion, for the wayes wherein himself walks towards man, usually called his works, or the wayes of his providence.

Note.

It is the mark of an ungodly man, not to consider the works and providences of God, how God walketh towards him, or what he doth in the world.

(Isa. 1. 3.) *I have nourished and brought up children*, that is, I have done for my people as a father for his children; but what follows? *My people doth not know, Israel doth not consider:* They consider not what I have done for them, as well as not what I have spoken to them; they consider not how I have nourished and brought them up, as well as not how I have instructed and given them counsel; and from this neglect God infers, (*vers.* 4.) *Ah sinful Nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers*, &c. they quickly proceed to the doing of all evil against God, who consider not of the good which God doth or hath done to them. Read this sin, the not considering of the works of God, with the sinfulness of all the works of those unconsidering men, (*Psal.* 28. 4, 5. *Isa.* 5. 11, 12.) The Scripture makes frequent mention how extreamly ill the Lord takes it at the hands of men, when his works are not considered by them, when they regard not the operation of his hands. Indeed God doth much in the world, he walketh in many dark and hidden wayes, which though we consider, we cannot fully understand; *Thy way* (saith *Asaph*, Psal. 77. 19.) *is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy foot-steps are not known.*

God hath many invisible works both of mercy and of judgement; yet we should be, though not curiously, yet seriously searching, as much as possibly we can, even into those wayes of God which are unsearchable; we should consider, though we cannot search them out. But as for those works of God that are visible and plain, which are written as it were with the beams of the Sun, which are so plain and obvious, that he who runs may read them, to neglect the consideration of these, or lightly to pass them by, how sinful is it! Those works of God which are most plain, have wonders in them, if we could finde them out. As in the plainest Text of Scripture there is a world of holiness and spiritualness; and if we in prayer and dependance upon God did sit down and consider it, we might behold much more of those wonders then yet appear to us: It may be at once reading or looking we see little or nothing, as *Elijah's* servant, when he went once, he saw nothing, therefore he was commanded to look seven times; What now, saith the Prophet? O now I see a cloud rising *like a mans hand*; and by and by the whole surface of the heavens was covered with clouds. So you may look lightly upon a Scripture, and see nothing, and look again, and see little, but look seven times upon it, meditate often upon it, and then you shall see a light like the light of the Sun. 'Tis thus also with the works of God, we pass many of them by as small matters, but when throughly considered, there is a wonderful depth in them; now not to consider those wayes of God wherein he is so visible, and which are the actings and exercising of his power, goodness, wisdome, and faithfulness, this must needs be a very great sin, (*Isa.* 26. 11.) *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see,* (they take no notice of it, much less lay it to heart) *but they shall see,* (they shall be made to see one way or other,) *and be ashamed for their envie at the people,* or (as the margin hath it,) *towards thy people.* As godly men see the hand of God, and are both confirmed and comforted for his mercy to his people, so wicked men shall see, and be both ashamed and confounded, because they both envyed the people of God that mercy, and opposed it. They who will not see the works of God to give him glory, shall see them to their own shame. God hath given us his works of Creation, that we should consider them daylie, as *David* did (*Psal.* 8. 3.) *When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the Moon, and the Stars which thou*

Arcana imperii.

thou hast ordained; What is man! &c. How was the Psalmist ravisht with that contemplation? And so may we, while we consider the works of Providence, whether works of judgement, or works of mercy; whether vengeance upon the wicked, or deliverance for the godly.

Let us therefore set our selves to this soul-ravishing, and God-exalting work, the consideration of the works of God: And we are the more engaged to do it, because God hath fitted man, among all creatures in this lower world, (and he hath only fitted man) to give him glory by considering his works. The beasts of the earth cannot glorifie God by considering his works; 'tis true, both they, & the fowls of the ayr, with the fish of the sea, according to their kinde, praise God; but man only is fitted and furnished with an intellect or understanding faculty to consider, and so to draw out from all the works of God, those peculiar excellencies which make his Name glorious: Now, for man to leave such a faculty unexercised and unacted, (as they who consider not the works of God do) is not only a dishonour to God, but a degradation of himself. *As it is the priviledge and happiness of a man to enjoy the benefit of the works of God, so it is his holiness and his duty to consider the beauty of them.* And to all who brutishly lay by the works of God without consideration, let me adde this consideration; God considers all your works or wayes, and will not you consider the works, the wayes of God! Of this be sure, whether you consider the wayes of God, his *Word-wayes*, or *Work-wayes* (of this be sure) God will consider your wayes, certainly he will; those wayes of yours which in themselves are not worth the considering or looking upon, your sinful wayes, though they are so vile, so abominable, that if your selves did but look upon them and consider them, you would be utterly ashamed of them, yea though they are an abomination to God while he beholds them, yet he will behold and consider them. The Lord who is of purer eyes then to behold any the least iniquity, to approve it, will yet behold the greatest of your iniquities, and your impurest wayes to consider them. Thou (saith *David*, Psal. 10. 14.) *Thou beholdest mischief and spite, to requite it:* God beholdeth the foulest dirtyest wayes of men, their wayes of oppression and unrighteousness, their wayes of intemperance and lasciviousness, their wayes of wrath and maliciousness, at once to detest, detect and

and requite them. If the Lord thus conſidereth the wayes of men, even theſe filthy and crooked wayes of men; ſhould not men conſider the holy the juſt and righteous wayes of God? And that God conſiders all the wayes, the worſt of wayes of the ſons men appeares further in the next verſe.

Verſ. 28. *So that they cauſe the cry of the poore to come up to him, and he heareth the cry of the afflicted.*

If the wayes of men come up to God, then ſurely God conſiders the wayes of men, even their vile and baſe wayes, their wicked and unworthy wayes; how can he but conſider thoſe wayes, the cry of which cometh up to him?

So that they cauſe the cry of the poore to come up to him.

Effectum hujus malitiæ oſtendit. Aquin:

Here *Elihu* expounds to us or gives us more particularly what thoſe wayes of God were which thoſe men would not conſider, as alſo what the ſin of thoſe mighty ones was, which provoked God, *to ſtrike them as wicked men in the open ſight of others.* The wayes of God which they would not conſider, were the wayes of his righteouſneſſe and juſtice, of his compaſſion to and care for the poore, they went quite croſſe to thoſe wayes of God. *For they cauſed the cry of the poore to come up to him.* But doe ungodly men bring the cry of the poore up to God? Certainly they have no ſuch purpoſe, and therefore thoſe words,

So that they cauſe the cry of the poore to come up unto him,

Note only a conſequent, of what thoſe men did, not the intent of thoſe men; they aymed at no ſuch thing by their oppreſſing the poore, as that God ſhould heare the cry of the poore, yea they hoped the cry of the poore ſhould never come up to God. They would willingly have ſtopt the mouthes of the poore, that they ſhould not have cryed to God, and preſumed the eares of God would be ſtopt againſt their cry, let them cry as long as they would: they doe not ſay to the poore, goe and appeale to God, goe make your moane to God, (yet ſome have been thus impudently blaſphemous, when they have oppreſt the poore, to bid them, goe cry to their God) but here we are to underſtand it as the iſſue of the oppreſſion, not as the deſire of the oppreſſors. Their cruel and unrighteous dealing with the poore (like that of *Pharaoh*

Pharaoh with the *Iſraelites*) *cauſed the cry of the poore to come up unto him.*

Further, Some render the text, not as expreſſing (though ſuppoſing) the cry of the poore coming up to God, but as reflecting or turning back in ſad effects upon their oppreſſors; *So that they cauſe the cry of the poore to come upon him*; that is, upon every one of them, meaning the wicked themſelves; they cauſe the cry of the poore to come upon them, or pull downe vengeance upon their owne heads. Severall learned Interpreters give that reading, taking the relative *Him* as a ſingular put for a plurall diſtributively, *upon him*, that is, upon every one of them; taking alſo *the cry of the poore* by a metonymie of the effect, for that puniſhment which they deſerved by their oppreſſion, who cauſed the poore to cry. As if he had ſayd; *By this their wickedneſs they draw downe the wrath of God upon themſelves.*

Inducendo ſuper eorum quemq; clamorem tenuit, quum clamorem pauperis exaudit. Jun:

But I ſhall only purſue our reading, and give the ſenſe accordingly. *They cauſe the cry of the poore to come unto* [*him*] that is, unto God. The cry of the poore is their mournfull cry, their pitifull lamenting cry; yet this cry may poſſibly be, not ſo much vocall as reall, not ſo much what the poore did make formally or directly to God about their wrongs, but the very wrongs and evills which they ſuffered cryed to the righteous Judge of all the earth. Their affliction had a cry, a voyce, a tongue, a thouſand tongues in it. *They cauſe the cry*

of the poore.

The word properly ſignifieth thoſe who are exhauſted and drawne dry; oppreſſors will ſqueze and ſuck ſuch as they get into their power, till they have drawne out every drop; they will empty them from veſſel to veſſel, till they become empty veſſels, and then like empty veſſels the poore ſound moſt and make the greateſt cry. When oppreſſors have got all the money out of the purſes of the poore, when they have pull'd the bread out of their mouthes, and even drawne the blood out of their veines, then they (poore ſoules!) ſound out and ſend up their cryes to purpoſe. *So that they cauſe the cry of the poore to come up unto him.*

Hence note.

First, *One ſin makes way for another.*

Turning

Turning back from God, brings in the non-conſideration of the word and works of God; The word and works of God, not being conſidered, brings in the workes of unrighteouſneſſe towards men, or oppreſſion of the poore. One ſin given way to, makes way for many more. No man knows where he ſhall end in doing evill, when once he begins to doe evill. *David* having defiled the wife is led to the murder of her husband. *Peter* having firſt diſowned or denyed his Maſter, proceeded to forſweare him. If good men are thus hurryed from ſin to ſin before they come to repentance, whether will ſin carry wicked men, who goe onne and onne impenitently?

Secondly, Note.

They are the worſt ſort of wicked who make poore men cry.

Oppreſſion is a ſin againſt the light and law of nature, as well as againſt the light and law of God; every ſin is the more ſinfull, by how much it is committed againſt more light of any kinde, or againſt more kindes of light; And thoſe ſins are extreamly high, which are committed againſt the loweſt and moſt common light, that of Nature. They who ſin againſt the light of grace, againſt the light of the Spirit, ſin (as the Prophet ſpeakes, *Hoſ:* 6. 7.) *like men*, but they who ſin againſt the light of nature, ſin as if they were not ſo much as men but very beaſts, yea worſe then many beaſts, there being ſcarce any of them who (as oppreſſors doe) devoure thoſe of their owne kind, though of ſome of them it be ſayd and experienced (eſpecially of the fiſhes in the Sea) that the Greater devoure the leſſe, as the mighty men of whom *Elihu* ſpake did the poore, *cauſing their cry to come up unto God.*

Thirdly, Note.

Oppreſſion will quickly cauſe a Cry.

(*Iſa:* 5. 7.) *I looked for Judgement, but behold oppreſſion, and for righteouſneſſe, and behold a cry*; that is, the cry of the oppreſſed. As the act of oppreſſion is a crying ſin, ſo the effect of it is crying; Oppreſſion cryeth loud, though the oppreſſed ſhut their mouthes in ſilence and ſay nothing, yet uſually the oppreſſed cannot forbeare crying. The Apoſtle *James* (Chap: 5. 3.) ſchooles the wicked rich men of the world, with, *a Go to now weepe and howle, &c. Your riches are corrupt, and your garments moth-eaten; Behold*

Behold the hire of the labourers which have reaped downe your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, cryeth, and the crys of them which have reaped are entred into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. As the poore labourers cryed, ſo their hire that was detained cryed alſo. The loud cry both of the oppreſſed and of oppreſſion is often reported and recorded in Scripture, read (*Exod:* 2. 23. *Lam:* 1. 17. *Chap:* 2. 18. *Pſal:* 86. 14.) The oppreſſed who cry are in a ſad condition, but the condition of oppreſſors who make the poor cry is much more ſad; For, as the text hath it,

The cry of the poore cometh up to God.

Though God ſhould not come downe to that, yet that cometh up to God. And when it is ſayd the cry cometh up to him, and not he at the cry. This intimates the cry of oppreſſion, a very loud cry, that's a loud cry that aſcends up to heaven; *Cities walled up to heaven*, are high-walled Cities, and cryes reaching up to heaven, are high-ſtrained cryes. The breach of a commandement makes a great crack, eſpecially when it is ſuch a breach as makes the poore cry too. If a Great houſe, or a Tower fall ſuddenly, what a noyſe doth it make? Certainly the unjuſt pulling downe of any poore man, is like the fall of a great houſe, or of a tower, it makes a noyſe that reacheth up to heaven; he doth not ſpeak of Gods coming downe. When *Cain* had ſlaine his brother *Abel*, the Lord ſayd (*Gen:* 4. 10.) *The voyce of thy brothers blood cryeth unto me from the ground*; and ſo the cry of *Sodom* came up to God, (*Gen:* 18. 21.) The fall of a poore man makes a report as farre as heaven. Among men the fall of Princes and mighty men, makes a huge noyſe, all the world is filled with the fall of a Prince, 'tis told every where, A great Prince is fallen. But I tell you the fall of a poore godly man, of the meaneſt of the ſervants of God, makes a greater cry then the fall of the greateſt Prince in the world who is not ſo. The fall of a poore man by the oppreſſion of the wicked, poſſibly is not heard a mile from the place where it was done on eatth, yet it reacheth up to heaven; oppreſſion hath not only a voyce, but a very loud voyce. To wrong a rich man, who can beare the wrong and be a rich man ſtill, is a ſin which hath a voyce in it; but the ſin which the Scripture ſaith hath a cry in it, is the oppreſſing of a poore man. There is no liberty given to wrong a rich man, and that would be conſidered; Some

take a kinde of liberty, if he be a rich man that they are to put a reckoning upon, they thinke they may doe it somewhat largely, and say, *he is able to beare it.* But be the man never so rich and able to beare it, yet to wrong him is a sin, and a sin that God will take notice of to punish. And though he can beare the wrong done, yet the wrong-doer will hardly be able to beare it when he comes to reckon with God for it. Thus (I say) to wrong the rich offends God; but to wrong the poore cryeth to God; *and* as it followeth in the text.

He heareth the cry of the afflicted.

Many cryes come up to God which he doth not heare, he doth not regard them, and 'tis possible for a poore man to cry to God and God not heare him, in the sence here spoken of; Some poore men cry (as we say) before they are hurt; they cry rather out of discontent then want, they cry because they have not what they desire, not because they have not what they need. God will not heare the cry of such, though poore: but when a poore man is afflicted, when a poore man that is humbled (as the word here signifies) and layd low in his state, is low also in spirit, and lowly in minde, God heareth the cry of such a poore man. If a poore man have a proud spirit, or is humorous, God will not heare him, though he cry. The word here rendred, *afflicted*, signifies not only a man destitute of helpe, of strength, of friends, of assistance, (such is the reach and strength of that word) but he is one of a submitting patient spirit, or it noteth a man not only first, unable to resist his oppressor, but, secondly, unwilling at least not forward to make resistance, but sitting downe by the losse quietly, or possessing his soule in patience when he hath lost all that he possessed by oppression. The Lord hears the cry of this afflicted man; he will not reject his cry, nor stop his ears against it. And when *Elihu* saith, *He heareth the cry of the afflicted*, his meaning is, he yeilds or grants him the thing he cryes for.

עניים *inopes id est, destituti ope, nec valentes resistere, sed malum patientes tolerantes et subjicientes se Dei.* Coc:

Hence note.

First, *God graciously heares the cry of humble oppressed ones.*

Whosoever cry to him upon just cause, being indeed oppreſt, though they are not godly, yet God will take notice of their cry; for he will right the oppressed as oppressed, and therefore the Jewes had those cautions (*Exod.* 22, 23. *Deut.* 24. 15.) not to

to wrong any servant or stranger, let him be who or whence he would, *lest he cry to me* (saith God) *and it be sin to thee.* But when any are not only oppreſt and suffer wrong, but are also godly, of humble and lowly spirits, they are heard much more; when it is not only a cry of nature, but a cry of grace; not only a complaining cry, but a praying cry, God will certainly heare (*Luke* 18. 12.) *Shall not God avenge his own elect that cry to him day and night?* when it is not only a complaining cry that they are under oppression, but a believing cry to be, or that they shall be delivered from oppression; when it is a holy cry, the cry of the elect, God cannot but hear their cry. He heareth other cryes, he heareth the cry of the Ravens when they call upon him, and provides for them, much more will he hear the cry of Saints, the cry of believers, the cry of the humbled and humble.

Secondly, as hearing notes granting,

Observe.

The cry of the oppressed brings vengeance upon oppressors.

Read *Psal.* 12.6. *Eccles.* 10. 26. *Isa.* 33.1. *Jer.* 22.16. All these Scriptures teach this truth, that the cry of the oppressed brings vengeance on oppressors: Let the mighty remember, *'Tis dangerous medling with Gods poor*; 'tis dangerous medling with any poor, but most dangerous medling with Gods poor. Some will say, there is such a great man, it is dangerous medling with him, and they are afraid to wrong him, they dare not do it; if ever (say they) he should come to know it, he may break our backs, sit on our skirts, and crush us with his power; but if they can get an underling, a man below them, they presume there is no great danger in oppressing him; what can he do? if he bark, he cannot bite; if he hath a tongue, he hath no teeth; we can deal with him well enough. Thus, I say, men think it dangerous to wrong great men, but conclude they may do what they please with the poor, and those that are underlings; but we should more fear to wrong a poor man, then to wrong a rich man, though we ought not to do either; yet, I say, we should more fear to wrong the poor then the rich, because the poor are under the special protection of the great God; they are under more promises of protection then the great men of the world are. Therefore *Solomon* gives that serious caution, (*Prov.* 23. 10, 11.) *Enter not into the*

Vineyard of the fatherleſs; (do not oppreſs the poor fatherleſs,) *for his avenger is mighty, and God will plead his cauſe for him.* You think you may do any thing with the poor and fatherleſs; O ſaith wiſe *Solomon*, take heed, do not invade the heritage of the fatherleſs, (we are not to take the fatherleſs there in a ſtrict ſence, for thoſe whoſe parents are dead, but any that are poor and low, are fatherleſs, as the Prophet calls them *Hoſ.* 14. 3.) *In thee the fatherleſs findeth mercy*; beware ſaith he how you deal with the fatherleſs, *for his Redeemer is mighty*: though he hath no might, yet he hath *a mighty Redeemer, and he will plead his cauſe for him.* Poſſibly the poor man cannot plead with thee, he cannot try it out with thee in Law, he cannot fee an Advocate, but God can and will be his Advocate. Therefore you that dare not wrong the mighty for fear they ſhould cruſh you, be much more afraid to wrong the poor, for God is their avenger, and how eaſily can he cruſh you?

Laſtly, This is matter of comfort to the godly poor, to the humble and meek; they may look for help from God in all their afflictions and hard uſages they meet with in this world from the hands of men; when men even eat them up as bread, and ride over their heads as if they were but dirt, they may appeal to heaven and there have audience, they may refer their cauſe to God and be righted, *He that is their Redeemer is mighty, and he will plead their cauſe*; *The expectations of the poor ſhall not periſh for ever*, (Pſal. 9. 18.) that is, it ſhall never periſh.

JOB,

JOB. Chap. 34. Verſ. 29.

When he giveth quietneſs, who can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done againſt a Nation, or againſt a man only.

THis verſe is an argument or proof of what *Elihu* affirmed in the former, that, *God heareth the cry of the poor*: He doubtleſs heareth the cry of the poor, when he ſtops or takes away the cry of the poor, when he ſets the poor in a quiet ſtate, or ſettles them in peace, in ſuch a peace, as their proud and wrathful oppreſſors ſhall not be able to diſturb. Thus the Lord dealeth graciouſly in reference both to perſons, and Nations, that cry unto him; and that's an undeniable argument, that he heareth their cry, the cry of diſtreſſed perſons, the cry of diſtreſſed Nations.

Verſ. 29. *When he giveth quietneſs, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done againſt a Nation, or againſt a man only.*

The firſt part of the ſentence, rendred, *when he giveth quietneſs*, is but one word in the Hebrew, we had it before (*chap.* 3. 13.) where *Job* ſuppoſeth if he had died in his infancy, *then ſhould he have been ſtill, and been quiet, he ſhould have ſlept, and been at reſt.* The grave is a ſilent and quiet abiding place, the dead are quitted of all worldly unquietneſs. And at the 26th verſe of the ſame chapter, *Job* ſaith, *I was not in ſafety, neither was I quiet*: (that is, ſecure) *yet trouble came.* So then, as this word notes, the quietneſs of the dead who have no ſenſe of trouble, ſo it notes ſuch a quietneſs of the living as hath no fear of trouble. *When he giveth quietneſs*, or as Maſter *Broughton* tranſlates, *when he maketh reſt, who* &c. The Italian verſion is, *if he ſendeth home in peace,* &c. As if it had been ſaid, *If he by his ſoveraigne ſentence freeth out of ſlavery and oppreſſion, as he did the children of Iſrael out of the bondage of Egypt* &c. *If he commandeth reſt and quiet*, then, as it followeth,

שקט *quievit in Hiphit, quieſcere fecit.*

Who

Who can make trouble?

Or, as Master *Broughton* renders, *who can disturb?* Who can disease those to whom God gives ease, or oppresse those to whom God gives protection? The words bear the signification of a divine challenge, like that, (*Rom.* 8. 31.) *If God be for us, who can be against us?* or like that (*vers.* 34.) *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect?* Let us see the man, or the devil, that can charge the elect and prevail. Such is the Emphasis of the present Text, *When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?* Where is the man, high or low, great or small that can do it?

Further, the word which we translate *make trouble*, hath a three-fold eminent signification in Scripture.

First, It signifieth to *be wicked*, or to do wickedly; thus we read it at the 12th verse of this chapter, *Surely God will not do wickedly.* He that is altogether holy and righteous, doth all things holily and righteously. The same word signifieth to do wickedly, and to make trouble, because to do wickedly bringeth trouble often upon others, alwayes upon the doers.

Secondly, it signifieth *to condemn*; thus we translate, at the 17th verse of this chapter, *Wilt thou condemn him* (as one that hath done wickedly) *who is most just?* The same word may well signifie to do wickedly, and to condemn, because they who do so, are worthy to be condemned. In this sense also we translate it, in that famous Prophesie of Christ, (*Isa.* 50. 9.) *He is near that justifieth me, who shall condemn me?* or make me wicked and unrighteous. Thus some render the minde of *Elihu* in this place, if *he giveth peace or quietness, who can condemn?*

Ipso enim concedente pacem, quis est qui condemnat. Vulg.

Thirdly, The word signifieth, as we render, to *trouble*, molest, or vex; so we translate (1 *Sam.* 14. 47.) where 'tis said of *Saul*, that he *fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, and against the children of Ammon, and against Edom, and against the Kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines; and whither soever he turned himself, he vexed, or troubled them.* The word may be taken in these three significations with a subserviency one to another; for he that is wicked, or doth wickedly, deserveth to be condemned, or, men are condemned because they do wickedly: and he that is condemned by a righteous sentence is punished, and cannot but be troubled; a legal sentence of condemnation, brings a legal penalty upon the person condemned; we translate clearly to the sence of the Text, *who can make trouble*, when God giveth quietness? for here the word is not opposed to well doing, or acquitting, but to quietting and pacifying; *when he giveth quietness, who can make trouble?*

And when he hideth his face, who then can behold him?

The face of God, by a well known Hebraisme (very frequent in Scripture) signifieth the favour of God; Master *Broughton* reads, *when he hideth favour.* The favour which we bear to others, is most visible in the face, and therefore the face may well signifie favour. *David* over-looking all the good things of this world, prayed for a good look from God in this expression, (*Psal.* 4. 6.) *There be many that say who will shew us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance* (or *of thy face*) *upon us*: that is, shew us favour, or be favourable to us. And as the greatest good of Saints in this world, so all the good of the next world is comprehended in this one word (*Psal.* 16. 11.) *In thy presence* (the text is, *in thy face*, that is, in the full enjoyment of thy benigne and gracious presence) *is fulness of joy.* In like sense the word is used *Psal.* 21. 6. *Psal.* 67. 1. So then, *to hide the face*, is to withdraw favour, and kindness, love, and respect; more distinctly, this phrase of *hiding the face*, hath a three-fold importance, or may hold out these three things.

First, a distaste either against persons or things; we turn away our face from him, or that which we do not like, or is displeasing to us. The hiding of Gods face is a manifestation of his displeasure; *In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment*, saith God to the Church, (*Isa.* 54. 8.) This form of speaking is borrowed from their usage or practice, who refuse to admit into their presence, or so much as look upon such, whom they either really hate, or would seem at least to be much displeased with; As *David* gave command concerning *Absalom* (2 Sam. 14. 24.) *Let him turn to his own house, and let him not see my face.* When God withdraweth the wonted expressions of his love and kindness from a person or a people; then (according to Scripture sense and language, he is said to *hide his face* from them, *Deut.* 30. 20. *Psal.* 30. 7.)

Secondly, The hiding of Gods face, notes a refusal to help

these

thoſe who in ſtraits cry to him for relief and deliverance: For if we will not give a man our eye, we will hardly give him our hand; if we will not ſo much as look upon him, we will hardly aſſiſt him. When God hides his face, 'tis as much as his denyal of ſuccour; Thus *David* bemoaned himſelf, (*Pſal.* 13. 1.) *Why hideſt thou thy face?* that is, Lord, why withdraweſt thou thy help from me? That he was ſenſible of ſuch *withdraws*, is plain by the prayer which he made, (*verſ.* 3.) *Conſider, and hear me, O Lord my God*; and by the reaſon of it given (*verſ.* 4.) *Leſt mine enemies ſay, I have prevailed againſt him.* We finde *David* deprecating the hiding of Gods face upon the ſame ground, (*Pſal.* 44. 24. *Pſal.* 69. 17.) The Prophet is very expreſs in this point, (*Iſa.* 59. 1, 2.) *The Lords hand is not ſhortned that it cannot ſave, neither his ear heavie that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have ſeparated between you, and your God, and your ſins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear:* that is, as he diſtaſteth, and is diſpleaſed with you, ſo he denyeth you his uſual help and aſſiſtance, becauſe ye have great-ſinned againſt him.

Thirdly, the hiding of God's face, notes not only ſome diſtaſte, and a denyal of help; but a total ſlight, or refuſal of any care concerning us, (*Iſa.* 40. 27.) *Why ſayeſt thou, O Jacob, and ſpeakeſt, O Iſrael, my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgement is paſſed over from my God*; that is, Why ſayeſt thou, the Lord takes no care at all of me, and in that ſenſe *Job* ſpake, (*chap.* 24. 1.) *Why ſeeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do they that know him not, ſee his dayes?* that is, why ſeeing God doth not neglect times, and ſeaſons, and how things go in the world, (there time is put for things done in time, why (I ſay) ſeeing God hath not caſt off the care of the things of this world) is it thus with me? Why am I as a man forlorn, and utterly caſt off? We may expound *Elihu* in all or any of theſe ſenſes; *when he hideth his face*, or withdraweth his favour that is, when God is diſpleaſed and refuſeth to help, when God throweth up the care of a mans perſon, or condition, it cannot but go and be ill enough with him; for as it followeth,

Who then can behold him?

The face of God as taken for his eſſential being, cannot at all be ſeen, nor can we at all behold him; *There ſhall no man* (ſaith the

the Lord, *Exod.* 33. 20.) *ſee my face, and live*; But, as the face of God is taken for any manifeſtation of his being, whether in wrath or in love, in judgement or in mercy, ſo it may be ſeen: Now when God hideth his face, that is, his favour, and will not give out any pleaſing manifeſtations of himſelfe, *who can behold him?* that is, who can behold him with comfort? who can ſtand before an angry God? or abide his preſence? As the gracious preſence of God is the ſweeteſt, ſo the wrathfull preſence of God is the moſt bitter thing in the world. *When he hideth his face, who can behold him?*

Some expound thus; if God will not ſhew his face, if he is not pleaſed to reveale himſelfe, no man can know, or ſee any thing of him; that's a truth. We can know no more of God, then himſelfe will reveale of himſelfe to us; 'tis *in his light* (Pſal: 36. 9.) that is, in the light which he cauſeth to ſhine from himſelfe, that *we ſee light*, or what and who himſelfe is, *who is light, and in whom there is no darknes at all.* If God will hide his power, or his wiſdom, or his truth, or his mercy from us, who can ſee any thing of them? though all theſe perfections be alwayes more glorious in him then the beams of the Sun, yet unleſſe God ſhew them us, we cannot perceive them. We ſee the light of God in Gods light; if God hath a minde to conceale himſelfe, or draweth (as it were) a curtaine between the creature and himſelfe, *who can behold him?* we cannot by any ſtudy, or skill, or art, or endeavour of ours come to any ſight or knowledge of God, further then himſelfe makes himſelfe knowne. This expoſition is both true and uſefull; yet I conceive, when *Elihu* ſaith, *Who then can behold him?* his meaning rather poynts at theſe two things.

Firſt, Who can have any comfortable enjoyment of him; to behold a man whoſe diſpleaſure we ſuſpected, and find acceptance and freedome with him, is compared to our beholding the face of God. *I have ſeene thy face as though I had ſeene the face of God and thou waſt pleaſed with me*, ſayd *Jacob* to *Eſau* (Gen: 33. 10.) when his brother treated him ſo lovingly contrary to his expectation, he looked upon it as an evidence of the favour of God to him. Or *Jacob* being much affected with the countenance and kindneſs of *Eſau*, compared his face to the face of God, becauſe in his reconciled face he ſaw (as it were) the face of God ſmiling upon him. This was *Davids* argument, that God favoured

 him

him (*Psal:* 41. 11.) *because his enemies did not triumph over him*; much more is it an argument of Gods favour, when they speake and act friendly towards us, or when we behold their face and are accepted. *Joseph* threatened his brethren, *ye shall not see my face* (or behold me) *except your brother be with you* (Gen: 43. 3.) if you come without him, either I will not admit you at all into my presence, or I will look sowerly upon you. Thus to *behold God*, is to *see his face* (as 'tis sayd (*Chap:* 33. 26.) the repenting sick man should) *with joy*.

Secondly, Who can have any confidence in him, or boldnes with him; *David* speaking of godly and upright men, saith (*Ps:* 34. 5.) *They looked* (or, *shall look*) *unto him, and were lightned, and their faces were not ashamed*; that is, they beheld God or came to him, with much assurance of his favour. Some dare not so much as look another in the face, for shame or feare; but when we look a man in the face, it sheweth we have either confidence in him, and freedome with him, or courage enough against him. Now, if God hide his pleased face, or withdraw his favour, *who can behold him* confidently, or come to him with hopes to speed. Fierce *Abner* sayd to *Asael* (2 *Sam:* 2. 22.) *Turne thee aside from following me, wherefore should I smite thee to the ground* (I could easily doe it, and he did it presently) *how then should I hold up my face to Joab thy brother*. As if he had sayd, I can have no confidence to come to *Joab*, thy Generall, if I should kill thee. Guilt of evill done to others, drawes a jealousie that others will do evill to us, especially they who are neerely concern'd in the evill which we have done; we cannot hold up our face to or behold them with expectation of acceptance and favour, to whose neere relations we have been unkind or injurious. Thus, *if God hide his face who can behold him?* either with confidence or with comfort.

Some referre the relative *him* (*who can behold him?*) to man, not to God; as if the meaning of *Elihu* were this; *if God hide his face from any man, all men will hide their faces from him too*; *no man will looke kindly upon such a deserted person, or give him a good look*; *he shall have but frownes from men, from whom God withdraweth his favour*; that's a truth; He that is out with God cannot keep in long with men. Usually all sorts disowne him that is forlorne and forsaken of God; As *when a mans wayes please God* (because then God is pleased with him) *his enemies shall be at peace*.

Quis favorem ei exhibebit, a quo deus vultum averterit. Drus:

peace with him (Pro: 16. 7.) so when God is displeased with a man, his very best friends shall turne enemies to him. Yet I conceive the text carrieth it rather the other way, referring to God himselfe; *If God hide his face, who can behold him?* that is, who can confidently behold God, or draw neere to him with comfort? And so it generally comes to passe, or thus it is,

Whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only.

As if *Elihu* had sayd; What I have affirmed, that, *when God giveth quietnes, no man can make trouble, or when he hideth his face no man can behold him*, is appliable to whole nations, as well as to particular persons. This is an extensive truth, a truth of large concernment, and therefore a truth of necessary and important consideration. That which may be any mans or all mens case, should be studyed by every man.

Whether it be done against a nation, &c. עם

The particle which we render *against*, signifieth also *for*. We find it so translated *Psal:* 32. 6. and at the 36th verse of this Chapter. Now, to doe a thing for a nation or for a person, notes the doing of it with respect to or in favour of either. Thus we commonly speake in our language, *pray doe such or such a thing for me*. To this sense some render here, *whether it be done for a nation, or for a man only*. So, Mr *Broughton*, *whether it be done for a nation, or for an earthly man alone*. But, whether we read *for*, or *against*, the generall truth is the same. The word and power of God in sending good or evill upon nations or persons, in acting for or against them, is uncontrouleable and irresistible.

Further, to cleare the text, that word in the close of the verse, rendred *only*, signifieth, sometimes *together* (Ezra 4. 3.) sometimes *alike* (Psal: 34. 15.) and sometimes as we understand it *alone*, or *only*, whether it be done against a nation or a man together, or against a man only or alone, the matter is alike or the same to God. Many or one make a great difference among men in any matter, but they make no difference with God, he can deale with whole nations (in wayes of Judgement or mercy) as well as with single persons; yet because of the opposition which the text makes between *one man* and a *nation*, it is most sutable to translate it either *only* or *alike* not *together*.

יחד *tria significat simul, pariter, solum.*

Thus we ſee, how the Spirit of God by *Elihu* hath made a double application of the former part of the text (*when he giveth quietneſs, who can make trouble*, &c.) in this latter, firſt, to a nation; ſecondly, to a perſon. If the text were not thus expreſt, it might be thus expounded and improved without any ſtreine at all to it. But forasmuch as the Spirit of God hath told us diſtinctly, that this great truth concernes nations as well as perſons, therefore we have a cleare ground (beſides the great uſefullneſs of it) to ſpeake to the words in both their references. And this preſent *memorable day* (as alſo their native order) leades me ſpecially to ſpeake of them, firſt, under a National conſideration.

This Lecture was preached upon the Fifth of *November* 1658.

When he giveth quietneſs to a nation, who can make trouble or diſturbe the peace of it. And the text may well reſpect that national bleſſing, *peace*, becauſe the word tranſlated *giveth quietneſs*, ſignifies ſuch quietneſs primarily, as is oppoſite unto warre, ſedition, and tumult in a nation (*Joſh:* 11. 23.) *And the land reſted from warre*, it is this word, ſo (*Judg:* 3. 11.) *The land had reſt forty yeares.* (Judg: 3. 30.) *And the land had reſt fourſcore yeares.* (2 Chron: 14. 1.) *In his dayes the land was quiet ten yeares.* (Zech: 1. 11.) *And behold all the earth ſitteth ſtill, and is at reſt*; in all theſe places we have the word here rendred *quietneſs*, in oppoſition to warre; who knows not how great an unquietneſs warre makes whereſoever it comes? and by a like analogie, the word is ſometimes rendred *to be ſilent*. Warre is full of clamour (*Iſa:* 9. 5.) *Every battell of the warrier is with confuſed noiſe.* Not only is it ſo in ſome battells, but (ſaith that Scripture) 'tis ſo in all battels, *Every battel of the warrier is with confuſed noiſe.* What a noiſe is there in an Army, eſpecially when joyning battell with another Army? what beating of drums? what ſounding of trumpets? what neighing of horſes? what claſhing of armour? what groanings of the wounded? When God gives quietneſs or peace, there is none of this noiſe, none of this confuſed noiſe of the warrier. *Hannah* ſaith in her ſong (1 *Sam:* 2. 9.) *The wicked ſhall be ſilent in darkneſs*; that is, either they ſhall be deſtroyed and thruſt into their graves, where there's nothing but rottenneſs and ſtench, darkneſs and ſilence; or they ſhall be ſo affrighted & confounded with the horror and darkneſs of thoſe miſeries which ſhall come upon them while they live, that they ſhall not have a word to ſay, the mouth of iniquity ſhall be ſtopt. In this manner the wicked are ſilent in darkneſs; but the Lord can make his people ſilent in light, that is, he can give ſuch quietneſs as ſhall at once ſilence the noiſe of warre and all their own complaints. *When he giveth quietneſs* (this bleſſed ſilence to nations) *who then can make trouble?*

Hence obſerve.

First, *The quietneſs or peace of nations is the peculiar gift of God.*

Whoſoever hath or enjoyeth quietneſs, 'tis Gods work, but moſt eminently when nations enjoy it. Of nationall quietneſs the Lord ſpake by his Prophet (*Iſa:* 45. 7.) *I forme the light*, &c. *I make peace, I the Lord doe all theſe things.* As naturall ſo civill light is of Gods forming; as ſpirituall, ſo temporall peace is of Gods making. And the Church was confident he would be their *peace-maker* (*Iſa:* 26. 12.) *Lord thou wilt ordaine peace for us.* Some read it as a prayer, *Lord doe thou ordaine* (or command) *peace for us*; we as a profeſſion of their faith and hopefull if not full aſſurance that the Lord would ordaine peace for them. The Lord gives out an order, or makes an ordinance in heaven, when he pleaſeth for the peace both of Churches and nations here on earth. And the Church there had this good ground of their aſſurance, that he would doe it, even their former experiences of his great power and goodneſs in doing much for them, as it followeth, *for thou haſt wrought all our workes for us*; As if they had ſayd, Lord thoſe gracious preſervations which thou haſt heretofore given us in trouble, and deliverances out of trouble, ſtrengthen our faith both in praying that thou wouldeſt, and in believing that thou wilt, now at this pinch ordaine peace for us. To doe ſo is a mighty and a mercifull worke of God, and we may conſider it two wayes.

First, As the giving of quietneſſe to a nation is the reſtoring of peace, or the ſetling of them in a quiet ſtate, after they have been torne and troubled with warres, and toſſed with continuall tempeſts of trouble (poſſibly) for many yeares together. To bring peace out of warre, and quietneſs out of unſetledneſs, is a worke worthy of God. (*Pſal:* 46. 9.) *He maketh warres to ceaſe to the ends of the earth*; that is, all the world over. The end or ceaſing of warre is quietneſs. And to aſſure us that the Lord can make an end of warres, the Pſalmiſt in that place ſheweth us the Lord ſpoyling all the implements, or inſtruments of warre, *He breaketh the bow, and cuts the ſpeare aſunder, he burneth the chariots*

ots in the fire; Here are three great inſtruments of warre, the bow, the ſpeare, the chariot, all which are ſometimes comprehended under that one word the *ſword*, which is the moſt knowne and univerſal inſtrument of warre. Now, when neither ſword, nor bow, nor ſpeare, nor chariot, are to be had, we need not feare warre. And therefore that great promiſe of peace runs in this tenour (*Mic:* 4. 2.) *They ſhall beat their ſwords into plow-ſhears, and their ſpeares into pruning hooks* (then preſently followeth) *nation ſhall not lift up a ſword, againſt nation, neither ſhall they learne warre any more*; There muſt needs be peace when the art of warre is layd by as uſeleſſe, and ſhall be learned no more. That will be a bleſſed time indeed when the art military ſhall be out of date, and (being it ſelfe the greateſt interrupter of learning) ſhall be learned no more. When Souldiers ſhall turne Husbandmen and Vine-dreſſers, *beating their ſwords into plow-ſhears, and their ſpeares into pruning hooks*, then we ſhall have peace, and put away the remoteſt feares of warre. When a man caſteth away his ſword, we may very well conclude he intends to be quiet. Thus the Lord gives quietneſſe, to nations, which have been engaged in warre, by cauſing warres to ceaſe.

Secondly, He gives quietneſſe to nations by continuing their peace, when warres are ceaſed; for unleſſe the Lord give a check to the luſts and paſſions, to the wrath and rage of men, plow-ſhears are quickly turned into ſwords, and pruning hookes into ſpeares. To preſerve peace is the Lords worke, as much as to give peace. It requires the ſame or as great a power to keepe our peace as to make it; to keepe it out of the hand of the ſword, as to get it out of the hand of the ſword. When the king of *Aſſyria* threatned *Jeruſalem* with a ſiege, the Lord preſerved their peace, and ſent *Hezekiah* word (*Iſa:* 37. 33.) *He ſhall not come into this City, nor ſhoote an arrow there, nor come before it with ſhields, nor caſt a banke againſt it, for I will defend this City to ſave it.* The continuance of peace, and quietneſſe, is a continuall giving of it. Warres returne after peace, as clouds returne after raine, unleſſe the Lord prevent and forbid them.

Non minor eſt virtus quam quærere, parta tueri.

And have not we of this nation reaſon to acknowledge this double mercy.

Firſt, Was not the end of our late unnaturall warres, the gift of God? was it not he that made our troubles to ceaſe from one end

end of the nation to the other, yea throughout the three nations? If the Lord had not given the ſword a check, or counter-mand, if the Lord had not called in the commiſſion which he once gave the ſword, it had been devouring fleſh, and drinking blood to this very day. We read (as it were) a dialogue between the Prophet and himſelfe concerning the ſword (*Jer:* 47. 6, 7.) *O thou ſword of the Lord*, (ſayd the Prophet being grieved for the ſlaughter and deſolation which the ſword had made even in a ſtrange land) *how long will it be ere thou be quiet? put up thy ſelfe into thy ſcabbard; reſt and be ſtill*; Himſelfe anſwers himſelfe; *how can it be quiet ſeeing the Lord hath given it a charge againſt Aſhkelon, and againſt the Sea-ſhore? there hath he appointed it.* I ſpake to the ſword of quietneſſe (ſaith the Prophet) But alas! how can it be quiet, how can that ſheath it ſelfe in its ſcabbard, and not in the bowels of men, ſeeing the Lord hath given it a charge againſt *Aſhkelon?* As if he had ſayd, I ſee no entreaties can perſwade the ſword to reſt and quietneſs, till it hath fully executed the command of God, and done his work, though it be very bloody work, even the making of it ſelfe drunke with blood. The Lord can make the ſword quiet; & it will hearken to no voyce but his; if the Lord give a charge for the ſword to returne into the ſheath then it will, and if not, it will not. The ſword raged in theſe nations till the Lords work and will was done, and then that had done. And as we have reaſon to acknowledge, that the Lord hath commanded the ſword back into its ſheath, and given us peace out of warre, ſo

Secondly, That he hath continued our peace ſince the warre, *When he giveth quietneſſe, who then can make trouble?*

Note.

If God will give thoſe nations quietneſſe, where it was not, or continue it where it is, there is no power on earth can ſtop, or interrupt it.

Who can make trouble, where he ordaineth peace? *Balaam* was forced to this confeſſion (when he would have troubled the people of *Iſrael*, and went from mountaine to mountaine to ſeek divination) *I cannot curſe whom the Lord hath bleſſed*; why not, ſaid *Balak*, I will give thee a good fee if thou wilt, no, ſaith *Balaam* (Numb: 23. 20.) *The Lord hath bleſſed and I cannot reverſe it.* We may put this query, *When he giveth quietneſſe, who*

can

can make trouble? eſpecially to three ſorts of perſons.

Firſt, To politick men; ſome preſume they can trouble nations and ſhake the ſureſt foundations of peace, with the engine of their braine, with their wit and ſubtlety. Yet this engine proves uſeleſſe and unſerviceable to that end, where the Lord gives quietneſſe. *Ahitophell* was as an oracle of God for wiſdome in his times, and he ſtretcht his braines upon the tenters to make trouble, but God ſayd there ſhould be peace, and therefore (as *David* prayed) *his wiſdome was turned into fooliſhneſs. There is no wiſdome* (ſaith *Solomon* the wiſe, *Pro: 21. 30.*) *nor underſtanding nor counſel againſt the Lord.*

Secondly, We may put the queſtion (who can make trouble?) to mighty men; their power (the ſtrength of their Armies, and arme) cannot doe it? *Senacharib* came with a mighty hoſt to diſturb *Iſrael*, but he could not make trouble, he could not ſo much as ſhoot an arrow againſt *Jeruſalem*, when the Lord forbad it.

Thirdly, We may put the queſtion (who can make trouble?) to magicall men or ſorcerers; They cannot doe it by their witcheryes and enchantments; by their cloſeſt correſpondencies with the devill himſelfe. This was *Balaams* concluſion, who (it ſeemes) traded that way to doe miſchiefe (*Numb: 23. 23.*) *Surely there is no inchantment againſt Jacob, neither is there any divination againſt Iſrael: according to this time it ſhall be ſayd of Jacob, and of Iſrael, what hath God wrought?* When God is reſolved to give a people quietneſſe, though the devill would, he cannot diſturbe them. We need not feare witches or magicians (who correſpond with hell to trouble the earth) if God ſay there ſhall be peace; neither policy, nor power, nor witchery, can prevaile againſt the purpoſe of God.

Then happy are that people, who *have the Lord for their God* (*Pſal: 144. 15.*) what can a people deſire more to make them happy, then *to have the Lord for their God*, if we conſider theſe two things?

Firſt, God hath a negative voyce upon all the counſells of the wiſeſt men in the world; if he ſaith it ſhall not be, it cannot be, whoſoever ſaith this or that ſhall be (*Lam: 3.37.*) *Who is he that ſaith and it cometh to paſſe, when the Lord commandeth it not?* if he gives not his aſſent, nothing can paſſe into a law. The Lords ſingle negative ſtops the affirmative votes of all men joyned in one.

Secondly,

Secondly, The Lords power is paramount; He can effect what he willeth, whether men will or no. That's plaine in the text. *If he give quietneſſe, who can make trouble?*

To come a little nearer; This day, this *fifth of November*, which we ſolemnize in a thankfull remembrance of our deliverance from the *Gun-powder treaſon*, is a very great confirmation of this truth.

Who is there that was alive at that day (as ſeverall here I know were) yea who is there that hath heard of that day, of the ſubſtance and circumſtances, of the matter and manner of the *Gun-powder treaſon*, but can tell us, that a Popiſh party at home with their correſpondents abroad, intended to make trouble in this nation; ſurely there was a purpoſe to make trouble in the nation that day, if ever there were a purpoſe to make trouble in any nation. What did they leave unattempted, to promote the trouble of this nation? Counſels were joyned for a conjunction of forces to trouble this nation. The men ingaged in that plot, may properly be called *Trouble-makers*; It was their buſineſs or their deſigne to trouble the waters, that themſelves might fiſh in thoſe waters of trouble. We may with reſpect to their purpoſe, (though God prevented it graciouſly) truly ſay to them what *Ahab* ſayd falſly to *Elijah*, *Theſe were the men that would have troubled our Iſrael*; they would have made trouble in every way, and in every thing, wherein trouble could be made by men.

Would it not have made trouble to deſtroy the King the chiefe Governour of theſe three nations, with his royall iſſue in one day?

Would it not have made trouble, to blow up the repreſentative of the nation, the Parliament, in one day?

Would it not have made trouble, to put the whole body of the people into a confuſed heape, without a head, in one day?

Would it not have made trouble in the nation, to have ſeene Papal power, with Popiſh Doctrine and worſhip brought in againe upon us within a few dayes?

Would it not have made trouble, to have ſeene poore ſoules impriſon'd, perſecuted, and conſumed to aſhes for their conſcientious witneſs-bearing to the truths of the Goſpel?

Would it not have made trouble, to have loſt our civil liberties, and to have had a yoke of ſpirituall Bondage layd upon our necks by worſe then *Egyptian* taſk-maſters?

Would it not have made trouble, to ſpill the blood of thouſands? Was it not an attempt to make trouble, to attempt all theſe things which would probably, that I ſay not certainly, have been the iſſue of that plot, if it had ſucceeded? Let us therefore praiſe the Lord, who was pleaſed to prevent it, and ſayd it ſhall not be. They did every thing to make trouble, but make trouble; they did every thing, but proſper in their deſigne: They took ſecret counſell, they took oaths, yea they took the Sacrament to aſſure the ſecrecy of thoſe counſels and oaths. All this they did towards the making of trouble, yet they could not; God ſayd at that time let *England* be in quietneſs, and therefore, only, thoſe Romiſh Emiſſaries and incendiaries could not make trouble.

Againe, If we conſider the preſent ſeaſon wherein we live, 'tis a confirmation of this truth, God hath given us quietneſſe for ſome yeares; and hath he not preſerved this quietneſſe hitherto, againſt all thoſe both perſons and things that would have made trouble? if God had not confirmed our peace, we had been in trouble long before this time, but yet our peace continueth, yet it continueth; and is it not wonderfull that it ſhould continue, if we conſider.

Firſt, The ſins of the nation which are the ſeed of trouble, eſpecially thoſe two generall ſins, firſt, unthankfullneſſe for our peace; Secondly, our ill improvement of it. How have many abuſed their peace to nurſe up their pride, wantonneſs and vani y! and being delivered from the feare of men, have even caſt off the feare of God! what juſt cauſe is there, that we ſhould looſe that peace which we have uſed ſo ill, and have almoſt turned into a warre with God himſelfe! yet hitherto the Lord hath given *England* quietneſs, and none could make trouble.

Secondly, If we look upon the diviſions, both in opinion, and affection, that are found among us, is it not a wonder that yet we have peace! if God had not *given quietneſſe*, doubtleſſe theſe differences, of which we are ſo ſadly full, had filled us with trouble long before this time.

Thirdly, While we conſider the different intereſts which have been abetted and hotly purſued by too many in this nation, is it not marveilous in our eyes, that our peace is continued! divided intereſts make greateſt diſtances, & open thoſe breaches through which trouble uſually enters upon a nation. When a people are of one

one mind, of one heart and way, trouble can ſcarce find any way to come in among them. But only God (who peremptorily gives quietneſſe) can give quietneſſe to and prevent the trouble of a people who are divided in opinions, affections, and Intereſts. As therefore it is the moſt deſireable mercy that a people may be all united as one man, in one mind, heart, and way, according to the mind, heart, and way of God; ſo it is a moſt admirable mercy, to ſee their peace continued while any conſiderable part among them are diſ-united in any of, eſpecially if in all theſe.

Fourthly, Conſider, that ſince the time of our peace, we have had many changes, we have been emptied from veſſel to veſſel, from hand to hand, from government to government, and from governour to governour; and is it not matter of aſtoniſhment as wel as of thanks-giving, that yet we have quietneſs! how many have waited and hoped, yea deſired and longed for our day of trouble, by theſe changes, revolutions and viciſſitudes, but yet we have peace. Muſt we not then conclude, *If God giveth quietneſſe, none can make trouble*; neither our ſins, nor our diviſions, nor our animoſities, nor our changes ſhall put it into any mans power (though they put an advantage into many mens hands) to make trouble where the Lord our God is graciouſly & freely pleaſed to give us quietneſs. Yet let us be in a holy feare, leſt we at laſt provoke God, and ſin away our quietneſs, and make trouble for our ſelves. The condition of a people who doe ſo is very wofull; for ſurely (as it followeth in the text)

If he hideth his face, who then can behold him?

This latter part of the verſe is applicable to a nation as well as the former, and therefore before I come to ſpeake of either with reſpect to a ſingle perſon, or *a man only*.

Obſerve.

God ſometimes hideth his face from whole nations, even from thoſe nations that have the outward profeſſion of his name.

As there are national mercies, ſo national calamities, as his people in common may have the ſhinings of Gods face upon them, ſo the hidings of his face from them. Did not God hide his face from the people of *Iſrael*, his peculiar people, when they were though a profeſſing people, yet a very ſinfull & provoking people?

(*Iſa.* 59. 2.) Is it not ſayd (*Jer:* 7. 12. 14, 15.) *Goe ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh, where I ſet my name at the firſt, and ſee what I did to it, for the wickedneſs of my people Iſrael*; God would not alwayes owne that place which he ſignally called his owne, and had ſet his name there, and that, *at firſt* (which was a great endearement of it to him) but when they ſinned much againſt him, he would not ſo much as give them a looke of favour, no nor of pitty, till they turned from their wickednesſe; yea he made his levere proceeding with them a preſident to his people in another Generation, as it followeth in the ſame place. *Therefore will I doe unto this houſe which is called by my name, wherein ye truſt, and unto the place which I gave to you, and to your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh. And I will caſt you out of my ſight, as I have caſt out all your brethren, even the whole ſeede of Ephraim.* There's a nation caſt out of the ſight of God. To be caſt out of Gods ſight is more, if more can be, then Gods hiding his face from a people. The Church complained bitterly of this latter (*Pſ:* 44. 24.) *Wherefore hideſt thou thy face, and forgetteſt our affliction, and our oppreſſion.* We uſe to ſay, *Out of ſight, out of minde*; and when God leaves a nation under affliction, as if he did not minde them nor cared what became of them, then the Scripture ſaith, *he hideth his face from them*, or, *caſteth them out of his ſight*. I ſhall only adde three things about this hiding of the face of God from a nation.

Firſt, This hiding of his face, is not a ſudden act of God, he doth not preſently nor eaſily hide his face from a people. He tells them often he will doe it, before he doth it once. The Lord warned the old world long, before he brought the flood (*Gen:* 6. 3.) *And the Lord ſayd, my ſpirit ſhall not alwayes ſtrive with man, for that he alſo is fleſh: yet his dayes* (wherein I will ſpare him and wait for his repentance) *ſhall be an hundred and twenty yeares.* Of this patience the Apoſtle ſpake, telling us (1 *Pet:* 3. 19, 20.) That Chriſt by the Spirit which quickned him, *went and preached to the ſpirits in priſon* (not in priſon when he preached to them, but in priſon ever ſince for not obeying what he preached, as the text ſaith) *which ſometime were diſobedient, when once the long ſuffering of God waited in the dayes of Noah, while the Arke was a preparing: wherein few, that is, eight ſoules were ſaved by water*; God did not preſently hide his face from that debauched Generation, who had corrupted all their wayes, but gave them long warning, even an hundred and twenty years. And how often did God give warning before he withdrew or hid his face from the people of Iſrael, his ſpecial people? He ſent his Prophets riſing early, and ſending them, ſaying, *Oh do not this abominable thing that I hate*, (Jer. 44. 4.) And in another place, *O Jeruſalem, be inſtructed, leſt my ſoul depart (or be diſjoynted) from thee*; (Jer. 6. 8.) as if he had ſaid, I am loth to depart, yea I will not depart, if thou wilt but now at length hearken to my voice, and receive inſtruction.

Secondly, As God is long before he begins to hide his face from a Nation, ſo he doth it not all at once, but gradually, or by ſeveral ſteps: we read (*Ezek.* 9. 3.) how *the glory of the God of Iſrael was gone up from the Cherub whereupon he was, to the threſhold of the houſe*: Then (*chap.* 10. 18.) *The glory of the Lord departed from off the threſhold of the houſe, and ſtood over the Cherubims*: And then (*chap.* 11. 23.) *The glory of the Lord went up from the midſt of the City, and ſtood upon the Mountain, which is on the Eaſt ſide of the City.* When the Lord was departing from them, he did it by degrees; he withdrew and hid himſelf by little and little, as in the Eclipſe of the Sun, whether partial or total, we obſerve the light gradually ſhut in and hidden from us.

Thirdly, As God is long before he hideth his face, and long in hiding it from a Nation, ſo (which makes it dreadful) his face being once hid, continueth long hid from Nations. He doth not return preſently to them, as he often doth to particular perſons. The Eclipſes of Divine favour abide long upon Nations and Churches. We commonly ſay, *Great* bodies move ſlowly; And God is uſually ſlow in his motions both from and towards great bodies; as he doth not quickly remove from them, ſo he doth not quickly return to them. He ſtayeth long before he hideth his face, and he makes them ſtay long before he cauſeth his face to ſhine upon them again. When for the ſin of Iſrael God gave up both them and the Ark into the hands of the Philiſtines (though the Philiſtines vexed with the hand of God upon them, ſent it back ſhortly after, yet) it was long before it was fully ſetled among them, (1 *Sam.* 7. 2.) *And it came to paſs while the Ark abode in Kirjath-jearim, that the time was long, for it was twenty years, and all the houſe of Iſrael lamented after the Lord.* The Ark (which was a ſigne of God's

Gods preſence with them)being removed,was not ſoon reſtor'd to its proper place; yea it was 20. years inore after that,before it was ſet in its place by *David*,(2 *Sam.*6.17.)And whereas it is ſaid,that in thoſe firſt twenty years, *they lamented after the Lord*, this ſignifieth, that all thoſe years God was (comparatively to what he had ſomtimes been) but as a ſtranger in the land, leaving them under the cruel oppreſſions of the Philiſtines: nor did they recover his favourable preſence, till they ſolemnly repented and reformed, putting away their ſtrange gods, and *Aſhtaroth*, preparing their hearts unto the Lord to ſerve him only, as *Samuel* exhorted them to do at the third verſe of that chapter. The Jewiſh Nation in after ages had ſad experience of this in the Babyloniſh captivity; when God hid his face from them, it was ſeventy years before he lookt upon them again: and ſince that Nation provoked him (by their rejection of the Goſpel) to lay them aſide, God hath hid his face from them above theſe ſixteen hundred years, and they are to this day a ſcattered unſetled people,and wanderers among the Nations, having their hearts hardned, and their eyes ſhut againſt the light of the glorious Goſpel. And as the Jewes, ſo many Chriſtian Churches have for a long time felt the ſad effects of theſe Divine hidings and withdrawings. Thoſe ſeven famous Churches in *Aſia*, mentioned in the ſecond and third chapters of the Revelation, *Epheſus*, *Smyrna*, &c. have been under this woful Eclipſe many hundred years; nor have thoſe ancient Churches in *Africa*, where *Tertullian* and *Auguſtine* once flouriſhed, recovered the preſence of the Lord to this day. Let the Nations and Churches abroad remember this, and tremble to provoke the Lord to ſuch departures and defertions. God hath long hid his face from the Bohemian Churches,& ſubjected them again to the Papal yoke; ſeveral parts of *Germany* are under the ſame hidings: the light is departed from them, and they are left in much darkneſs; their ſtate is very deplorable, and their former purity, both as to doctrines of faith,and practiſe of worſhip (as to humane help) irrecoverable. And ſhould not the dealings of God with them, awaken us in theſe Nations and Churches, to remember and conſider the wonderful patience of God in continuing our peace, notwithſtanding all our provocations, leſt at laſt he hide his face from us alſo,and then who can behold him? A throng of evils and miſchiefs will ſoon appear to us with open face,if once God

God hide his face. And it will not be unuſeful to inſtance a little in this place, what thoſe evils and miſchiefs are which throng and croud in upon Nations and Churches, when God hideth his face from them.

Firſt, When God hideth his face from a Nation,he layeth down his former care of them, and watchfulneſs over them, he takes little or no notice of their caſe and condition, of their troubles and ſtreights, (as was toucht in opening the Text) he regards not how it is with them, nor what becomes of them. Such apprehenſions the Prophet had in reference unto the people of Iſrael, (*Jer.* 14. 8.) where he humbly expoſtulated with the Lord, *Why art thou as a ſtranger in the land,& as a wayfaring man that turneth aſide to tarry for a night*; a ſtranger or a wayfaring man,intending to ſtay but a night in a place,thinks not himſelf concerned with the ſtate of that place; if he can but get a ſupper and a lodging for his money that night,he troubles himſelf no further:whether it be well or ill with the place,whether it be ſickneſs or health,if he can make ſhift for a night, he is ſatisfied. Thus the Prophet conceived the Lord even as a ſtranger among his people, little minding what became of them, whether they did ſink or ſwim, whether it were peace or trouble, joy or ſorrow with them. And, further, he repreſents the Lord not only as a ſtranger, but as a man aſtoniſhed, not only as a man who cares not to help, but as a man who cannot. An aſtoniſhed man, how mighty ſoever he is, hath no uſe of his might. He that can do little with his reaſon(that's the caſe of an aſtonith'd affrighted man) can do leſs with his hands. Now ſuch a one is God to his people (that is, he will do no more for them then ſuch a one) when once he hideth his face from them.

Secondly, When the Lord hideth his face from a Nation, he hath no regard to their prayers and ſupplications, no not to their faſts and humiliations; that ſpeaks ſadly. Prayer is *our beſt ſtrength*, it engageth the ſtrength of God; by prayer we have our reſort to God, and fetch all our help and ſuccour in a day of trouble from his All-ſufficiency. If once God ſay to a people, I will not hear nor anſwer your prayers, they are in a moſt forlorn condition. Thus God reſolved againſt the people of Iſrael, (*Jer.* 14. 12.) *When they faſt, I will not hear their cry*: And as he would not regard their own prayers, ſo he forbade the Prophet to pray for them, (*verſ.* 12.) *The Lord ſaid unto me, pray not for this peo-*

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ple for their good; yea, he tells them, he would not regard the prayers and intercessions of any others for them, (*Jer.* 15. 1.) *Though Moses and Samuel stood before me*, (that is, should become Advocates in their behalf) *yet my heart could not be towards this people*, (that's a sure and a dreadful prognostick of ruine, as it followeth) *cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth.*

Thirdly, When the Lord hides his face from a Nation, he refuseth to give them counsel, or to direct their way. We need the counsel of God as much as his strength; as we cannot do what we know unless he strengthen us, so we know not what to do unless he counsel us. And when ever God hideth his face from a people, he hideth counsel from a people. When God hid his face from *Saul*, who was in a publick capacity, and in a publick case, his war with the Philistines, O how he complained that he could get no counsel, (1 *Sam.* 28. 6. 15.) *The Lord answers me no more, neither by Urim, nor by Thummim, nor by Prophet, nor by Dreams*; as if he had said, I cannot get a word of direction from God, what to do in this calamitous and intricate condition, wherein my self and my Kingdome are plung'd, by reason of this Invasion; I know not what to do, and God will not at all give me any intimation what to do, nor how to do, what is safest, or most conducing to my own safety and preservation. The Prophet brings in the Church lamenting this effect of Gods hiding his face, (*Psal.* 74. 9.) *We see not our tokens, there is not any Prophet, nor any that can tell how long*; as if they had said, heretofore God was wont to give us signes and tokens, he would even work miracles for us, or he would send a Prophet to instruct and advise us what to do, we had those who could tell us *how long*, that is, how long our troubles should last, and when we should have our expected end of them; but now we are in trouble, and no man can tell us how long, now we are left to the wide world, to shift for our selves as well as we can; the Lord will not advise us what to do, nor give us his minde what's best to be done, or how to proceed; thus deplorable was their condition upon the hiding of Gods face from them.

Fourthly, (which is yet worse) when the Lord hides his face from a people, he doth not only with-hold his counsels, but gives them up to their own counsels, & that is, to their own hearts lusts, (*Ps.* 81. 12.) *Israel would none of me* (saith God) *they would not harken to my voice*: What then? *So I gave them up to their own hearts lusts, and they walked in their own counsels*: and that was to give them up to a spirit of division, to a spirit of discontent, to a spirit of envie and jealousie, to a spirit of ambition, of self-seeking and emulation, and so to a spirit of distraction and confusion, and so to ruine and destruction: such and no better is the issue, when God gives a people up to their own counsels; then they soon become a very Chaos, and run themselves into a ruinous heap. *As good have no counsel from man, as none but man's.*

Fifthly, When God hides his face from a Nation, he is ready to declare his displeasure, and the forest testimonies of his fierce anger, formally, against them; God looks upon a sinfully sinning people as a burthen upon his heart; he is prest, and even oppresst with them, he loaths them, his stomack turns at the thought of them, (*Isa.* 1. 24.) *Ah! I will ease me* (the Hebrew is, I will be comforted, or I will comfort my self, that is, I will unburden my soul, and satisfie my self by taking vengeance) *of my adversaries*, that is, of my people who have rebelled against my command, and have been disobedient to my word. These the Lord counts no more as his children and friends, but as his enemies, and numbers them among his adversaries; *Ah*, saith he, I *will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies*: I am grieved to do it, yet I must do it, I am resolved to do it. As soon as the Lord had declared that he would receive no intercession for Israel, he adds, (*Jer.* 15. 1. 2.) *Cast them out of my sight, let them go forth, and it shall come to pass, if they say unto thee, whither shall we go forth? then thou shalt say unto them, thus saith the Lord, such as are for death, to death, and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the famine; such as are for captivity, to captivity; I will cause them to be removed into all Kingdoms of the earth*, (vers. 4.) *and as I will not pity them, so none shall*, (vers. 5.) All these tokens of displeasure fall upon a people when once the Lord hides his face from them. Yea then the Lord himself will go forth against them as a *fierce Lion*, (*Hos.* 5. 14, 15.) He was to Israel as *a moth, and as rottenness*, (vers. 12.) that is, a secret consumption, he would also be an open destruction to them *as a Lion*, yea as a *Leopard by the way would he observe them*, or lye in wait for them, *and meet them as a Bear that is bereaved of her whelps, and rent the very caul of their heart*, (Hos. 13. 7, 8.) The Lord

God takes upon him the actings of the most savage beasts in righteousnes, to shew how much he is provoked, when he seeth his people act like beasts in unrighteousnes, filthines, cruelties, sensual pleasures; when men behave themselves unlike men, *God will not meet them* (as he told Babylon he would not, *Isa.* 47. 3.) *as a man*, that is, either in the weakness of a man, or in the compassions of a man; but he will meet them either as a beast of prey, who hath no compassion, or as God in the fulnes of his power, not drawing forth, but quite restraining his compassions. Yea, the Spirit of God will strive no more in wayes of mercy with such a people, but *turning their enemy* (Isa. 63. 10.) will fight against them. He not only forbeareth to assist them against, & deliver them from their enemies, but even assisteth their enemies against them, or delivereth them up into their enemies hand.

Sixthly, When God hideth himself from a people, he removes their spiritual enjoyments; he takes away his holy Ordinances, his Worship, the light and power of his Gospel, or leaves them nothing but the shells and out-side forms of them; they shall be fed with husks, because they have not improved sweet kernels and wholsome food; they shall have long shaddows, but little true light or Sun-shine. Vision shall cease; God will take away his Ministers and be gone, and then they are presently over-run with errour and superstition upon one hand, or with ignorance and prophaneness on the other.

Seventhly, He will spoil them also in their Civil enjoyments, he will take away good Magistrates, who are as a staff and a stay, as a shield and a shelter to a Nation; he will break the stay and staff of Government, as he threatned (*Isa.* 3. 1, 2.) and then (as it followeth *vers.* 5.) *The childe shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable*; he will leave them to the corruption of Justice, Judgement shall *be turned away backward, and justice shall stand afar off, and then truth falleth in the streets, and equity cannot enter*, (*Isa.* 59. 14.) and after all this, what will he do with them? He will either leave them to the worst of National evils, total Anarchy, or, *he will give children to be their Princes, and babes shall rule over them.* When God hid his face from the Jewish Nation, he broke their Government by taking away ten Tribes out of *Rehoboams* hand, and putting them under *Jeroboams*; and out of his hand they fell into the hand of several other wicked Princes, til at last they were carried into captivity by the common enemy. These & the like are the woful effects of Gods hiding his face from a Nation; from all which we may well conclude with *Elihu* in the Text, who then can behold him? who can bear his wrathful presence, when his face or favourable presence is hidden from us? To shut up this point, I shall only adde, that because these hidings of Gods face are gradual, (as was shewed before) therefore they are little taken notice of; as the Prophet complained (*Hos.* 7. 9.) *Gray hairs are here and there upon them, and they know it not*; that is, they are in a declining condition, (gray hairs are the signes of old age, which is the declension of mans life, he alludes from the body Natural, to the body Civil or Politick, they are I say, in a declining, weakning, spending condition) yet they lay it not to heart. And that's a sore, if not the chiefest judgement of God upon a Nation, when hiding his face, he hides his judgements from them, and gives them up to hardnes of heart, to blindnes of minde, and a spirit of stupidity, that they see not nor take notice of their own danger, nor the departure of God from them, which is the cause of it. And still the more God hideth his face from a Nation, the more miserable they are, and withal, the more insensible of their misery. So much from that consideration of the Text, as to a Nation, *When he giveth quietnes, who can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? Whether it be against a Nation,*

Eorum mihi videntur idonei sensus & omnino Germanum qui hanc libertatem dei, sive pacem concedendi sive condemnandi (vel turbandi) ad tyrannos tantum curvat & eos qui impiè vivunt. Sanct.

Or against a man only.

As this verse respects a man only, or a single person, it is expounded two or three wayes.

First, Of Oppressors and wicked men; as if he had said, *When God will give a wicked man quietnes or prosperity in his sinful way, who can make his estate troublous, or trouble him in his estate? He shall be quiet while the will of God is to suffer him to be so; and if God once hide his face from him*, that is, *declareth displeasure against him, who can behold him?* that is, *who among the mightiest of wicked oppressors, can lift himself up against, or stand before God?*

Si detur pacem tribuat impius, quis illius provocationem & acerba judicia cordi mitare audeat. Gregor.

Secondly, The words are expounded of the oppressed, or of godly men; as if he had said, when God is minded or resolved to give peace and quietnes to any of his faithful servants, who can hinder him, or trouble them? and when he is pleased for reason-

best known to himself, to leave any of his faithful servants in darkness, and withdraw the light of his countenance from them, who among them can behold him? that is, bear or endure his angry appearances.

Quum ipse tranquillet (scamjiros affligat, quis inquietabit? si eum abscondit faciem (sc. ab improbis) quis contemplabitur eum. i. e. quis improbum aversanti Deo audet obstare. Jun.

A third expounds the former part of the verse according to the second Exposition of the whole verse concerning the oppressed or afflicted godly, *if God will give them quietness, who can give them trouble?* And the latter part of the verse, of Oppressors, *if he hideth his face from wicked and unjust men, who can behold him?*

Further, Some who take this sence, do not understand it as an act of God hiding his own face, but as an act of God hiding the face of the wicked Oppressor; as if it had been said, *When God hideth a wicked mans face, and wraps him up as a condemned man,* or when, by the command of the Magistrate, after his legal tryal his face is covered, being ready to seal the warrant for his execution; (*Hamans* face was covered as soon as the Kings word went out against him) then *who can behold him?* Some insist much upon this interpretation, in allusion to the custome of those times, when condemned malefactors had their faces covered; and indeed, when God wraps up the oppressors face as a condemned man, *who can behold him,* that is, who can hold up his face against God, or resist him in this work of justice. But I intend not to prosecute the personal consideration of the Text under these distinct notions, but shall only take up the general sence; *When he giveth quietness to a man, who can make trouble? and when he hideth his face from a man, who can behold him?* I shall only adde Master *Broughton's* gloss upon the whole verse; *when for the poor he kills the mighty, none can stay him; and when he hideth his favour, none can finde it.*

Hence Observe.

First, *The quietness or peace of any man, of every man, is of the Lord.*

If God will have a wicked man live in quietness, so it shall be, and God hath given, and doth often give them quietness. I *have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green Bay tree,* (Psal. 37. 35.) *David* spake this from a good witness, the sight of his eye: I (saith he) have seen the wicked in much outward

outward pomp and splendour, and as the outward peace and quietness, pomp and splendour of the wicked is from God, so also is both the outward and inward peace of any godly man.

First, The outward peace, or the peace of a godly man in his outward estate, is of the Lord, (*Psal.* 4. 8.) *I will both lay me down in peace and sleep, for thou only makest me to dwell in safety:* that is, thou O Lord wilt watch over me in the night, and not suffer me to be surprized by any sudden danger, and therefore I will quietly repose my self upon thy gracious promises, and throw off those cares and fears, which as thorns in the pillow, would not suffer me to rest, when I lye down in my bed: the Lord is my safety, even the rest of my body. In the 5th chapter of this book (*ver.* 23, 24.) *Eliphaz* telleth us, how the Lord secures the outward condition of a good man, and gives him such quietness, that even *the very beasts of the earth shall be in league, and the stones of the field at peace with him, and he shall know* (or be assured) *that his tabernacle shall be in peace.*

Secondly, The inward peace, the soul peace, the spiritual peace of a godly man is much more from the Lord, (*John* 14. 27.) *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, so give I unto you*; as if Christ had said, I will not deal with you after the rate of the world, that is, either deceitfully and falsly, or rigorously and unjustly; I will not give you such measure as the world gives you, nor in such a manner; *I give you my peace,* therefore *let not your hearts be troubled, neither be you afraid:* what-ever outward trouble the world can give you, be not afraid of it before it cometh, nor troubled at it when 'tis come, I will give you inward peace in the midst of all your troubles. Christ invites the weary and the heavie laden to come to him, with this promise, *I will give you rest,* (Matth. 11. 29.) soul-rest he meaneth; that Title or name of Christ, *Shiloh,* (Gen. 49. 10. *The Scepter shall not depart from Judah, until Shiloh come*) signifies tranquility, peace, and rest; As Jesus Christ hath bought our peace and rest with his blood, so he bears it in his name. The fountain of our soul-peace is the heart of the father, *Grace and Peace from God the Father,* &c. (*Col.* 1. 1, 2. 1 *Thess.* 1. 1.) The purchase or price of this peace, is the blood of the Son, (*Col.* 1. 22.) *He hath made our peace through the blood of his Cross:* Our peace cost dear, it cost blood, and that the blood of the Son of God. The convey-

conveyance of this peace is made by the holy Spirit; he is sent to bring the good tydings of peace unto believers: the Spirit speaks peace from God, and witnesseth with our spirits, that we are at peace with God. And as this peace is at first from God the Father as the fountain of it, & from God the Son as the Purchaser of it, and from God the holy Ghost as the Speaker of it; so the continuing and renewing of this peace is from the same God. He establisheth and setleth the heart in that peace which he hath given, and he restoreth that peace when at any time we have lost it, and the heart is unsetled. *David's* soul being unquiet, and his peace ravell'd after his sin, he addressed to God for the renewing of it, (*Psal.* 51. 12.) *Restore to me the joy of thy salvation.* *David* petitioned the restoring of his peace, while he petitioned the restoring of his joy: 'tis possible to have peace without joy, but there can be no joy in that soul, which hath not first attained to peace. We must wait upon God both for the restoring of our peace when it is departed, and for the continuance of it when it is enjoyed. *When he giveth quietness* to a man, either as to soul, or body, or both,

Who can make trouble?

Note, Secondly.

The quietness or peace which God bestows upon any person is an invincible, an insuperable peace and quietness, as to all that this world can do, or he suffer in this world.

If God will give a quiet outward estate, no man can disturb it; when God gave *Job* outward quietness, what a mighty man was he? how did he flourish? Nor could any break his outward peace; Satan confest it in the first chapter, *Thou hast made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath, on every side*; there is not the least gap open, no nor stake loosned in his hedge, who can touch him? who can come at him? I cannot touch him, Sabeans and Chaldeans cannot touch him. While the Lord giveth and guardeth our outward peace, it is inviolable. And as to our spiritual peace, if the Lord speak it, who or what can trouble the soul?

First, The afflictions, tribulations, and vexations which we meet with in the world, cannot trouble this inward peace; while storms are without, there will be a calm within; the soul may be at peace, and

and the conscience quiet, in the greatest visible confusions. Let the world turn about and overturn, let it shake and break into a thousand pieces, this peace abides unshaken, unbroken: let the world rage in the heat either of war or persecution, yet the heart is serene, fixt, and quiet, like Mount Zion, that cannot be removed. Christ tells his Disciples (*John* 16. 33.) *These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace*; (and in the same verse he foretells them) *In the world you shall have tribulation*: as if he had said, you shall have a peace concurrent and contemporary with your tribulation; trouble from the world shall not hinder the peace you have from me; yea, my peace shall conquer the troubles you have in the world. Thus the Prophet tryumphed in believing, (*Hab.* 3. 17.) *Though the labour of the Olive should fail, and the Vine yeild no fruit, though there be no Calves in the stall, nor Sheep in the fold*, &c. *yet I will joy in the Lord, and rejoyce in the God of my salvation.* To rejoyce in the Lord, is more then to be quiet, or to have peace in the Lord. *Joy is the exaltation of peace, it is the most delicious fruit of peace*: The worst of worldly evils cannot despoil us of the least purely spiritual good, much less of the greatest. *Him wilt thou keep in perfect peace, whose minde is stayed on thee*, (Isa. 26. 3.) That's perfectly perfect to which nothing can be added, and from which nothing can be taken away; yet that is truly perfect, to which though something may be added, yet it cannot be either totally or finally taken away. Such is the soul-peace of true believers in this life, and therefore a perfect peace.

Secondly, As outward tribulation cannot hinder the soul-peace of a godly man, so the policy, plots, and temptations of Satan our arch-enemy cannot, yea his charges and most spiteful accusations shall not. The great designe of the devil, is, to destroy and devour souls, his own condition being most miserable, he at once envies all those who are not in the same condition, and attempts to make them so; and when he fails in that attempt, the destruction of souls, yet he will not cease to attempt their molestation, and to trouble those whom he cannot utterly devour. Now, as Satan cannot at all prevail in the former attempt, the destroying of souls, so he cannot wholly prevail in the latter, the troubling of souls. Hence that gallant challenge of the Apostle, (*Rom.* 8. 33, 34.) *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect? it*

is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth, it is Christ that dyed, yea rather, that is risen again, &c. As if he had said, let all the enemies of our spiritual peace rise up and combine together, they shall not be able to condemn, that is, wholly to discourage or disquiet the heart of a believer, he having received (*his quietus est*) rest and peace from God, in the justification of his person, and the pardon of his sins. Satan can do much, and would do more (if his chain were lengthned, and he not restrained) to the trouble and molestation of our souls, there's not a godly man living should rest an hour in quiet for him, if he might have his wish or his will; but because God gives quietness to some believers, and will not have it so much as stirr'd, therefore Satan cannot make any trouble at all in their souls, but they live in the constant light of God's countenance, and in the joy of the holy Ghost. And because the quietness which every believer hath is the gift of God through Jesus Christ, who hath made their attonement, and established their peace, through the blood of his Cross, therefore Satan cannot make any such trouble in any of their souls, as shall for ever destroy their peace, or dissolve their quietness, though for many reasons, all serving his glory, and their good, God suffereth satan many times, possibly for a long time to entangle and interrupt it. Temptations to the committing of sin, and accusations or charges about sin committed, may exceedingly hinder and shake the peace of a believer; but, as the sins to which he is tempted cannot hurt his peace, when he resists and overcomes them, so the sins into which he falleth through temptation, cannot destroy his peace, because those sins shall certainly be destroyed both by repentance and pardon.

Thirdly, The thunders of the Law cannot take away the peace of that soule, to whom God giveth quietness. Christ having in his owne person fullfilled the Law for beleevers, both doing the duty, and enduring the penalty of it, he hath delivered them from the terror and curse of the Law, himselfe having been made a curse for them (*Gal:* 3. 13.) So then if neither tribulations nor temptations, nor the terrors of the Law can make trouble, where God giveth quietness; we may conclude, nothing can.

There is a double Consideration upon both which, we may demonstrate, that if God giveth quietness, either outward or inward, none can make trouble.

First,

First, Because, as God is soveraigne and so may dispose peace and quietness, to whom he pleaseth, or at his pleasure, when he will, or to whom he will; so he hath an all-sufficiency to maintaine and confirme, to preserve and protect the outward peace of any man, against all the powers of this world; and the inward peace of a godly man against all the powers of hell, against the terrors of the Law, and the accusations whether of Satan or of his owne Conscience.

Secondly, None can destroy the peace of a godly man, because it is a perfect peace, as was shewed before from that promise in the Prophet (*Isa:* 26. 3.) *Him wilt thou keepe in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee.* For, being a perfect peace it will not decay of it selfe; and because 'tis perfect God will neither destroy it himselfe, nor suffer any else to destroy it. *Marke the perfect man* (saith *David*, Psal: 37. 37.) *and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.* He is a perfect man whose end is peace, and that is perfect peace which holds to the end, or which shall never end. The peace which God giveth is perfect; First, because 'tis established upon perfect righteousnesse, *the righteousnesse of God.* That righteousnesse which is the roote of our peace is called the righteousnesse of God, both because God hath appointed it, and because God hath wrought it. Jesus Christ *God-man* is the Lord our righteousnesse, and the Prince of our peace; or as the Apostle expresseth it (*Heb:* 7. 1, 2.) *He is Melchisedec, being by interpretation King of righteousnesse, and after that also King of Salem, which is King of peace.* (Isa. 32. 17.) *The work of righteousnesse is peace, and the fruit of it is quietnesse and assurance for ever.* Righteousnesse is such a foundation of peace, as cannot be shaken, and therefore that peace which is built upon it cannot be utterly overthrowne, how much soever it may be shaken.

Secondly, 'Tis a perfect peace, because it was obtained by an absolute victory over all the enemies of it. That people must needs be in perfect peace who have got a perfect conquest over all their enemies, and have got their opposers under their feet. Now the spirituall peace which God giveth his people, ariseth from a perfect conquest over all their enemies. First, the world is perfectly conquered by Christ (*John* 16. 33.) *Be of good cheare, I have overcome the world.* Secondly, the Devill is perfectly con-

quered by Christ (*Heb:* 2. 14.) *He hath destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the Devill.* He is more then conquered who is destroyed; Christ hath destroyed the Devill, who is the destroyer, though not as to his being, though not as to his will to destroy, yet as to his power to destroy those whom he hath redeemed, and will eternally save. Thirdly, Christ hath also perfectly conquered the Law (not by destroying but) by fullfilling it. Christ was above all that the Law required or commanded, and so he did at once freely submit to it, and fully (as to any hindrance of a believers peace) subdue it, he holdeth it under him as well as he was made under it. And he was contented for that very reason to be made under the Law, that he might hold it under him, and that we might not be under (the dread of) the Law (though we must walke and worke by the rule of it) but under grace.

'Tis matter of strong consolation to poore soules, that when the Lord *giveth quietnes none can make trouble.* And hence we also learne, that all the breaches which are made upon the peace of the people of God, are from God himselfe. As those breaches are meritoriously from themselves, so efficiently from God himselfe; till he breaks their peace none can.

Thirdly, From the second branch, *When he hideth his face, who then can behold him?* This being applicable to a single person as well as the former.

Observe.

God sometimes clouds his face from his owne servants, and children.

These words, *When he hideth his face,* suppose that God sometimes doth so, and the Scripture else-where testifies that God hath often done so; *God hath love alwayes in his heart towards his children, but he hath not alwayes favour in his face towards them;* his appearances are not alwayes the appearances of a friend, he may appeare angry, and turne away his face as if he would not be spoken with. Of this we find frequent complaints in Scripture; and I might speake much to this poynt, but I have already met with it (*Chap:* 13. 24.) and therefore I passe from it.

Only from the connexion of these words, *When he hideth his face, who can behold him?*

Note.

Note.

The hiding of Gods face, or the vayling of his favour is exceeding grievous unto any person.

When he doth it, *who can behold him?* This manner of speaking doth not only hold out, that if God will hide his face no man can see him, or know him; for God is a secret to all men untill he is pleased to reveale himselfe; yea all the truths of the Gospel are secrets, and mysteries, till God is pleased to reveale them and make them knowne (*Math:* 11. 25.) *Father I thank thee* (saith Christ) *that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes;* that is, thou hast not opened them to the wisest, &c. (there needs no other hiding of them from the wisest of men, than a forbearance to open them) but to the babes, who are (though weake, yet) humble and teachable, thou hast opened them, and opened their eyes and hearts to see and receive them. This speech holds out not only this truth, that when God doth not reveale himselfe, no man can know him or any thing of his minde, or that neither his nature, or his will are knowne but by some way of revelation; but this forme of speaking (*Who can behold him?*) plainly tells us, that if God hideth his favour, he is so terrible, that none can have the boldnes or courage to behold him. For the hiding of his face, implyeth an appearance of anger and displeasure; and when he is angry, who can behold him? *If the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance,* as the Apostle speakes (2 *Cor:* 3. 7.) surely then no man can stedfastly behold the face of God when his countenance is filled with wrath. Some said to Christ (*John* 14. 8.) *Shew us the Father and it sufficeth;* that is, reveale to us the love and good will of the Father, and that will satisfie us, that will fill up all the desires and longings of our soules; we shall have nothing more to wish for, nothing more to look after, if thou wilt but shew us the father. Now, on the other side, if the Father will not shew himselfe, if the Father will hide himselfe from the soule, what then can suffice? what can comfort? where is our refuge or rest? *As when God is quiet and favourable to us, he can make all things favourable and quiet to us;* So, if God be displeased, nothing can be pleasing to a soule that is sensible of his displeasure. A believer looses not

Tranquillus Deus tranquillat omnia.

only the joy and triumph of his faith, but his very peace, he is not only in a dark, but in a disturb'd condition, not knowing where to repose himselfe, or rest his head, when God hideth his face.

Take this inference from it.

If the hiding of Gods face be so terrible, then take heed of provoking him to hide his face.

For though we are not tenants at will for our peace in reference unto the world, in reference to men, in reference to devills; yet we are only tenants at will for our peace in reference unto God. He can take away our peace; and he doth usually continue our peace, only so long as we behave our selves well. As some have *Letters Patents* for great offices which run in that tenour; *They shall enjoy them* (quam diu se bene gesserint) *as long as they carry themselves well*; but upon default or male-administration they may be turned out of all; so I say, though we are not at the will of the world, nor of any creature, for the holding of our peace, yet we are at the will of God for it. And as he sometimes meerly out of prerogative hideth his face (as was shewed *Job* 13. 24.) that he may try what a soule will doe in a dark condition, and that he may declare what the strength of his invisible grace can doe when nothing is visible, no not any the least ray or shine of favour from himselfe to support and comfort the soule, I say, though God doth thus in a prerogative way sometimes hide his face) yet usually he doth it not, but upon some default in us, especially our neglect of him; when we regard not the face of God, and grow slight as to our valuations of his presence, then he withdraweth his presence and vayles his face towards us; and when we fall into any grosse sin (such was the case of *David*, *Psal:* 51.) God takes us upon default, and leaves us in a sad condition, as he did *David*, who complained that even his bones were broken, and that he had lost the joy of his salvation, which upon the renewing of his faith and repentance, he begg'd earnestly might be restored to him, and it was. Therefore *if you would keepe the light of Gods Countenance, keepe close to the light of Gods Commandement.* No marvaile if we be under the hidings of the face of God, when we are turning our backes upon God! Sin is a turning from God, a turning our backs upon God; and is it any wonder

wonder if God turne his face from sinners? To turne our backe upon God is the worst of a sinfull condition, and to find God turning his backe upon us, or hiding his face from us, is the worst of a miserable condition. What can comfort us, when the God of all consolation will not look upon us, unlesse in displeasure? What pleasure (but the pleasure of sin for a season, which ends, without repentance, in endlesse torment, what pleasure, I say) can that soule take in whom God taketh no pleasure, or with whom he is not pleased? It is very sad with the soule, when we loose the sight of our owne graces (sometimes a gracious heart cannot see any worke of grace, nor perceive any workings of grace in him, but thinks he hath no faith in God, no love to God, no sorrow for sin, this is sad) but it is much more sad to loose the sight of the face of God, to have the favour of God withdrawne from us. This made *Jonah* complaine (*Chap: 2. 4.*) *I am cast out of the sight of thine eyes*; he lookt upon himselfe as an outcast, and then *Jonah* thought himselfe as cast into the belly of hell (*v.* 2.) When God hides his face from us, or will not vouchsafe us a sight of his pleased face, we are as in the belly of hell, as *Jonah* bemoaned himselfe. What is the glory and happinesse of heaven? Is it not the sight of the face of God? is it not the cleare vision and manifestation of God? Glory is that estate wherein God will never once hide his face, nor look off from his glorified Saints, no not one moment to all eternity. Now the happinesse which we have here, the heaven which we have upon earth consists in this also; when we live neere God by believing, and behold his face by faith; when God lifts up the light of his countenance upon us, we are (as it were) lifted up from earth to heaven. *As vision in heaven will make us happy for ever, so hidings on earth make us miserable for the time.* And that which is the very hell of a godly man upon earth, the worst hell, he can or shall have, is this, when God hideth his face from him; Therefore take heed you doe not put the Lord upon withdrawing from you through your default. This favour, the shine or light of Gods face is continued or denied to us, usually upon these termes, as we behave our selves well or ill towards him.

Job.

JOB. Chap. 34. Verſ. 30.

That the hypocrite reigne not, leſt the people be enſnared.

THeſe words are the concluſion of *Elihu's* diſcourſe, about the executions of divine Juſtice, upon the ſons of men; And in them we have two things; Firſt, the power; Secondly, the impartiality of divine Juſtice. God is ſo powerfull, that he can pull downe the Mighty, and he is ſo impartiall that if there be cauſe, he will not ſpare to doe it.

Or in the words we have to conſider theſe three things.

Firſt, The character of the perſon upon whom the Juſtice of God is executed, The *hypocrite*.

Secondly, The Judgement it ſelfe, 'tis a ſtop to his greatneſſe, *that he reigne not*.

Thirdly, We have the grounds of this Judgement, which are two-fold.

Firſt, His wicked purpoſe, againſt the people; He, if ſuffered, would lay ſnares for the people.

Secondly, Gods gracious protection of the people; He will not have the people enſnared.

That the hypocrite reigne not, leſt the people be enſnared.

חנף *ſignificat ſceleratum, profanũ, plerumq; autem vertitur hypocrita.*

What a hypocrite is, and what the importance of the original word is, here tranſlated *hypocrite*, hath been opened from ſome other paſſages in this booke. I ſhall only ſay thus much further, that the word imports, Firſt, a filthy thing diſguiſed or covered; For a hypocrite is a filthy prophane perſon, under the cover or diſguiſe of holineſs. Our Engliſh word *knave* is neere in ſound to this Hebrew word *chanaph*, and ſome conceive 'tis derived or taken from it. And to be ſure, every hypocrite is a prophane perſon, though all prophane perſons are not hypocrites; Some wicked and prophane ones care not who knoweth they are ſo; yet very many who are indeed prophane and wicked cover ir, what they can, and ſhew that only whereof they have only a ſhew, ſomewhat of godlineſſe or of goodneſſe.

Againe, There are hypocrites of two makes or ſtraines; Firſt,

Firſt, Religious, or Church hypocrites. Secondly, State, or Civil hypocrites, and ſomtimes theſe two are combined in one. 'Tis poſſible for a man who pretends not to Religion, yet to be a hypocrite; A Magiſtrate, whether ſupream or ſubordinate, may offer very fair for the profit and liberty of the people whom he governeth, when he mindes no ſuch thing; yea, he may not only offer fair for the good of a people, as to their outward profits and liberties, but as to the good of Religion, and the benefit of their ſouls, and yet minde no ſuch thing; we may take the hypocrite in this Text, as twiſted up, or compounded of both theſe; *The State hypocrite and the Religious are ſomtimes bound up together. That the Hypocrite*

Reigne not.

To reigne is the priviledge of Supream Powers; *By me Kings reigne*, ſaith Wiſdome, that is Chriſt, (*Prov.* 8. 15.) and when *Paul* ſaw how high the Corinthians carryed it in ſpirituals, he by way of alluſion tells them (*1 Cor.* 4. 8.) *ye have reigned like Kings without us*; ye are got (as ye ſuppoſe) to the top, and into the very throne of Religion, and you think your ſelves able to manage all difficulties, and can do well enough there without our help; But to the Text.

This *not reigning* of the hypocrite may be taken two wayes.

Firſt, As a ſtop given him by the providence of God, from getting up into the throne, or from getting the power of a Nation into his hands; thus ſomtimes God ſaith to the hypocrite, *Thou ſhalt not reigne*, that is, thou ſhalt not exalt thy ſelf, though thou attempt it.

ממלוך *In ne regnat* Mem *Negationem includit juxta linguæ morem, & in*

ממי קשי *ab offendiculis ſimiliter ut dei magis extolletur juſtitia ſimul & potentia, qui reges de throno ſuo dejicit ut populum ejus laqueis irretitum liberet ab illi-*

Secondly, This *not reigning* may be taken for a ſtop to the progreſs of his power, when he hath both attempted and attained it; and that two wayes, either firſt by taking him away from his power; or ſecondly, by taking away his power from him; as *Daniel* told *Belſhazzar*, while he minded him of the greatneſs of his father *Nebuchadnezzar* (who had all the world (upon the matter) at his command) as alſo of his fall from that greatneſs, (*Dan.* 5. 19, 20.) *Whom he would, he ſet up; and whom he would, he put down; but when his heart was lifted up, and his minde hardned in pride, he was depoſed from his Kingly Throne, and they took his glory from him*: He was depoſed, or as the Chaldee hath it, (ſo we put

as tyrannide. Merc.

put in the margin) *He was made to come down from his Princely throne*; either of theſe wayes doth God (who is *the King of kings, and Lord of lords*) when he pleaſeth, put a ſtop to, or check the progreſs of falſe hearted Princes, that have either got their power by flatteries and pretenſions to that good which they intended not, or who exerciſe their power ſo. *That the hypocrite reigne not,*

Leſt the people be enſnared.

The root of the word here rendred *to enſnare*, ſignifieth the ſpreading of a Net, or the ſetting of a Grin, ſuch as Fowlers and Hunters make uſe of, to take Beaſts or Birds with; and thus God himſelf ſpake concerning his dealing with Babylon, (*Jer.* 50.24.) *I have laid a ſnare for thee, and thou art alſo taken, O Babylon, and thou waſt not aware*; litteral Babylon was a ſnare to the people of God of old, and ſo is myſtical Babylon at this day. *The great Hypocrite, or Snare-ſetter, reigns in or over Babylon*; therefore ſaith God, thou who haſt ſet ſnares for my people, ſhall be enſnared, thou ſhalt be taken unawares, I have ſet a ſnare to catch and hold thee faſt. When *Elihu* ſaith, *leſt the people be enſnared*, it ſeems to intimate, that God will prevent the enſnaring of a people by the hypocrite; He ſhall not reigne, *leſt the people be enſnared*, or leſt they ſhould come into ſnares. There is another reading, which gives the reaſon from the ſnares which the people have already been entangled with, *becauſe of the ſnare*, or *becauſe the people have been enſnared*, (therefore ſaith the Lord) *let not the hypocrite reigne*; thus God revengeth the peoples wrong, and doth juſtice upon thoſe that had ſet ſnares for them. So much for the general ſence of theſe words, and the opening of them.

There is a ſecond reading of the whole verſe, which carryeth the ſence ſomwhat another way, and yet may be of uſe, and yeild us ſome profitable conſiderations, but I ſhall not meddle with that, till I have proſecuted thoſe obſervations which ariſe clearly from our own reading.

The words in general hold forth the heart of God towards falſe hearted men, he cannot abide them, nor will he ſuffer them long to abide, eſpecially not to abide in power and greatneſſe; *That the hypocrite reigne not, leſt the people be enſnared.*

Hence

Hence Note. Firſt,

A hypocrite is a perſon hated of God, and hurtful to men.

He is therefore hated of God, becauſe hurtful to men. And therefore God is not pleaſed he ſhould reign, either as to reign is taken ſtrictly, for the exerciſing of Soveraign power; or, as to reign may be taken largely, for the exerciſing of any power, and living in the height of proſperity. For the clearing of this truth, that a hypocrite is hated of God, I ſhall ſhew, firſt the nature of an hypocrite; ſecondly, give the diſtinctions of hypocrites; thirdly, make ſome diſcoveries who is an hypocrite. To the

Firſt, An hypocrite in his general ſtate or nature, *is* (as I may ſay) *a wicked man in a godly mans clothes*; he hath an appearance of holineſs, when there's nothing but wickedneſs at the bottome. There are two great parts of the hypocrites work, firſt, to ſhew himſelf good, which he is not; this is properly the work of ſimulation or feigning: ſecondly, to cover that real evil which he is or doth: this is properly the work of diſſimulation or cloaking. The hypocrite ſtrives as much to appear what he is not, as not to appear what he is; he makes a ſemblance of that purity which he loves not, and he diſſembleth that impurity which he loves and lives in.

Secondly, We may conſider hypocrites under this diſtinction. Firſt, there is *a ſimple hypocrite*, who hath not the good which he thinks and believes he hath; thus every one that profeſſeth or nameth the name of Chriſt, and is not really converted, is an hypocrite; becauſe he hath not that which he ſeems to have, yea, which poſſibly he verily believes he hath; I may call ſuch a one (though it may ſeem a very ſtrange expreſſion) *a ſincere hypocrite*; he doth not intend to deceive others, but is deceived himſelf, becauſe he hath not the root of the matter in him, nor the power of godlineſs, though he brings forth ſome ſeeming fruits of godlineſs, and is much in the form of it. Such we may conceive ſhaddowed out to us by the fooliſh Virgins; they made a profeſſion, they had their lamps, yea, they had oyl in their lamps, they did ſomwhat which was conſiderable in the outward duties of Chriſtian Religion, and they hoped to be accepted with Chriſt, but they had *no oyl in their veſſels with their lamps, as the wiſe Virgins had*, (Matth. 25.4.) that is, they had no grace in their hearts,

nor did they minde the getting of that till it was too late, (*v.*10.) but satisfied themselves with that little oyle in their lamps to make the blaze of an external profession. Such as these are simple hypocrites, being pleased with a shell instead of a kernel, and with a shaddow, neglecting the substance. These hypocrites are in a very deplorable condition; yet these are not the hypocrites which I intend in this point, or have here to do with.

There are a second sort of hypocrites, commonly called *gross hypocrites*, such as hold that out which they know they have not, such as know they have nothing in or of Religion, but the shew of it; such as work by art, or with a kinde of force upon themselves in all the good they do, and duties they perform towards God, and about the things of God. They do nothing as the Apostle saith *Timothy* did (*Phil.* 2. 20.) *naturally, I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state.* The word *naturally* is not there opposed to *spiritually*, but to artificially, or to forcedly. What a sincere heart doth in the things of God, he doth it naturally, that is, it floweth from an inward principle, it is not forced from him, but the hypocrite doth all as it were by a kinde of art or force upon himself. The Lord chargeth the Jews with this kinde of hypocrisie, (*Isa.* 58.2.) *They seek me daylie, and delight to know my wayes, as a Nation that did righteousness*; that is, they acted with an appearing forwardness, like those who truly delight to know my wayes; yet all this was but as a piece of art, for as the Lord upbraided them (*vers.* 3,4.) they really kept their sins, and walkt in their own wayes of oppression, strife, and debate; yea they made all that noise about humbling themselves, that they might the more undiscernedly *smite others with the fist of wickedness*: and therefore saith the Lord (*v.* 5.) *Is it such a fast that I have chosen, a day for a man to afflict his soul*, &c. and then for many dayes to afflict both the souls and bodies of his brethren? or to abstain a day from meat, and glut himself with sin? That's the strain of the hypocrite, he (as I may say) maintains and drives two trades, he hath a trade for God, and the wayes of God, and he hath a trade for sin, and the wayes of wickedness; this is his course, (*Jer.* 12. 2.) *Thou art neer in their mouth, but far from their reins*; they speak of thee, but they have no desires to thee, no affections for thee, thou art far enough from their reins; they act a part in Religion, but they neither partake of Religion, nor with it. Thirdly,

Thirdly, There are others, who besides that they are gross hypocrites, may also be called *designing or plotting hypocrites*; for they that serve God *with a reserve*, as to any sin or by-way, usually serve him with a designe, or for an end of their own. Christ (*Matth.* 23. 14) speaking of gross hypocrites, such as the Pharisees were, saith, *they devour widdows houses, and in a pretence make long prayers*; they pray long in a pretence, or under a pretence; that is, they have a plot or a designe in prayer, they pray, not purely to enjoy communion with God, nor purely to honour God; but they make use of prayer, and under pretence of that, do other work. Christ doth not there speak against, nor disparage long prayers, as some do, to the great reproach of the Spirit and grace of God, but he chargeth them with praying long in *a pretence*: pray heartily, and then pray as long as you will; other due circumstances being observed, the more you pray, the more is God pleased. But whether prayers are long or short, if done in a pretence, or with a designe to do mischief to others, or only to get some worldly profit and advantage to our selves (as those Pharisees prayed) they are an abomination to the Lord. *'Tis not the length of prayer, but the end of prayer which discovers hypocrisie.* The prophet *Isaiah* (*chap.* 32. 6.) gives us a description of this gross designing hypocrite, *The vile person will speak villany, and his heart will work iniquity, to practice hypocrisie, and to utter errour before the Lord*: while the hypocrites heart worketh iniquity, his tongue speaks villany; not that all his words are villanous words, for then he were not an hypocrite, but a profest prophane person; but he is said to *speak villany*, because how pious, and specious, and godly soever his discourse is, yet he hath a villanous intent in speaking, and his heart at the same time is working iniquity, to practice hypocrisie.

Now that I may a little more unmask this plotting hypocrite, I will shew you a fourfold plot or designe, which such hypocrites have in their most zealous professions of, and pretendings to Religion.

First, They designe their own praise or estimation among men; Christ makes this discovery in his Sermon upon the Mount, (*Matth.* 6. 2. 5.) *Do not as the hypocrites, for all they do*, (whether they give almes, or pray, or fast,) is not for the glory of God, but that they may have glory of men, and be pointed at for charitable

ritable and holy persons; *Praise or glory with men is the food of hypocrisie.* If the hypocrite have but an applause from, and acceptance with men, he doth not look after acceptance with God, which above all things a sincere heart looketh after, and laboureth for; *In this we labour* (saith the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 5. 9.) *that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him*; that's the highest ambition of a sincere heart: but the hypocrites ambition is to be accepted of, and to have praise among men; and therefore hypocrites are more troubled, if at any time they fail in expressing themselves to men, then because (which they do at all times) they fail and faulter in their affections to God; whereas he that is sincere and honest with God, can bear it well enough though he hath not such plausible expressions towards men, because he knoweth his affections stand right with God. That great Macedonian *Alexander* having run many hazards in war, turned himself to his souldiers, and said, *What pains have I taken, what dangers have I undergone, only to be praised and cryed up by you?* As many in their worldly actings aime only at their own praise, so do this sort of hypocrites in their spiritual and holy actings; they pray, and hear, and deal about their almes for applause with men. What the Historian writes of the Camelion, is most true of them, they live by the ayre, and are fed with the vapours of an earthly praise.

Secondly, Others (most of all the mighty, of whom *Elihu* is discoursing) act for God in the out-side of Religion, to get an opportunity of revenge upon men; they put on a fair shew of godliness, that they may have a fairer advantage to let out their malice, and vent their spleen. When either a real or supposed injury, falls upon an impotent and impatient spirit; malice will provoke to give that back which charity teacheth to forgive. The tyrannie of this passion gives no rest to the discontented soul; all methods shall be studied, and stratagems devised to content hatred by the compassing of revenge; and when common projects fail, the habit of zeal and religion shall be put on, that the conceived malice may be let out: Such a man will cloath himself with the garments of piety, that he may cover the instruments of cruelty, and do a mischief unsuspected. *Saul* was a hypocrite, and false with God, yet how did he encourage *David* to follow the War, and *fight the Lord's battels* against the uncircumcised Philistines; (1 *Sam.*

1 *Sam.* 18. 17.) whereas *Saul* sought not the honour of God at all, nor the overthrow of the Philistines, so much, as the overthrow of *David*; his intent was to take his own revenge upon *David*, rather then Gods revenge on them: for he hoped *David* would one time or other over-act his valour against the Philistines, and lose his life, to win honour and reputation. How religiously did *Abner* (who was a great Prince as *David* called him) urge the promise of God to make *David* King, (2 *Sam.* 3. 18.) and yet 'tis plain in the Text, that his designe was to revenge himself upon *Ishbosheth*, who had put (as he thought) an affront upon him, rather then to be instrumental for the fulfilling of the promise of God to *David*. *Jezebel* a great Queen proclaimed a Fast (which is one of the highest acts of Religion) while her purpose was only to get an opportunity to feast her self upon the destruction of *Naboth*, and to drink his innocent blood. *Herod* a King (*Matth.* 2. 8.) desired to have the young childe Christ, *that he might come and worship him*, but his designe was to murder him; and because he could not have his will to kill him alone, he resolved to kill him in the multitude, commanding all the infants of such an age to be slain, lest he should escape. We have a sad instance of this in two of the Patriarcks, (*Gen.* 34.) I do not say they were hypocrites, but, I say, they acted a high strain of hypocrisie, and put on a religious pretence for the compassing of revenge. *Dinah*, *Jacobs* daughter being deflowred by *Shechem*, he sued to have her for his wife, and would wipe off the stain of his lust by a legal marriage; old *Hamor* pleaded for his son, and *Jacob* was willing enough (tis like) to salve the credit of his daughter; but the sons of *Jacob* answered *Shechem* and *Hamor* his father deceitfully (v. 13.) and they said, we cannot match with you, except you be circumcised, and so become Proselytes to our Religion. If *Shechem* will be of their family, he must be of their faith; they stood not upon their sisters joynture, the matter stuck only upon a scruple of conscience. What argument of greater zeal for God could they have given then this? Yet while these religious words were in their mouths, they had bloody swords in their hearts: And all this pretence for circumcision, was only that they might have an advantage, to come upon them in their soreness and destroy them; which (as the holy story tells us) they soon after effected.

Thirdly, Hypocrites often designe worldly gain, and ayme at the

the purse more then at God in all their holy services. Many take up a profession of Religion, as all men take up a Trade, *that they may get a Living by it*; the Apostle speaks of such (1 *Tim.* 6.5.) who suppose *that gain is godliness*; whereas he saith (*vers.* 6.) *Godliness with contentment is great gain*, they say, *Gain is godliness*; And all they look at by their profession of godliness, is worldly gain. Religion is often made (as the Apostles word is, 1 *Thess.* 2. 5.) *a cloak of covetousness*; and he professeth in the same place, that in the dispensation of the Gospel, he had not used his Ministery as such a cloak, God was his witness; but there are many against whom (though men cannot) yet their own consciences do, and God will witness, that their appearance in Religion is but the hiding of, or a cloak for their covetousness. *Hamor* and *Shechem* used no other argument to perswade their Citizens to take upon them the seal of the Covenant, but only this, *Shall not their cattel, and their substance, and every beast of theirs, be ours?* (Gen. 34. 27.) And it seems the very mention of their own emolument overcame them; they thought it a bargain well made, to sell a little of their blood at so high a rate, and to exchange their foreskins for so many head of Cattel. And hence it is, that among those seven sorts of Pharisees collected out of the Talmud, the first are called *Pharisæi Shechemitæ*, receiving (it seems) both their Order and Denomination from these Shechemites, because as they turned Hebrewes, so these became Pharisees upon the hopes of worldly benefit. And such were those Pharisees in truth, whatsoever their Title was, *who* (as was touched before) *devoured widdows houses, and in a pretence made long prayers.* As it is a very great point of ungodliness (prophaneness indeed) to say, *What profit is there in serving the Lord?* So it is gross hypocrisie to take up Religion meerly for profit; there is profit, even worldly profit in Religion; *Godliness is profitable for all things*, (1 Tim. 4.8.) *and hath the promise of this life as well as of that to come*; but wo to those that take it up designing profit, and the filling either of their purses, or their bellies. Our Saviours Divine Spirit quickly discovered this carnal spirit in his followers, (*John* 6. 26.) *Ye seek me not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled*; *Judas* followed Christ, but the motive of it, was in the bag, (*John* 12. 6.) The zeal of *Demetrius* to his Idol *Diana*, was kindled by as pure a fire as the zeal of these hypocrites

pocrites to Jesus Christ, (*Acts* 19. 24.) *By this we get our living.* They know nothing of the life of Religion, who are religious only that they may live: If profit be the Loadstone of our profession, our profession will never profit us; for what shall it profit a man to gain the whole world by a profession of the name of Christ, if he lose his own soul? Sathan charged *Job* with this grosse hypocrisie, (*chap.* 1. 9.) *Doth Job fear God for nought?* as if he had said, *Job* findes 'tis no lean business to be religious, and therefore no wonder if he be found so religious. Who would not do and be as much as he in Religion, to have his fields full of Cattel, and his folds full of Sheep, and his house full of Riches? He knows well enough which side his bread is buttered on, what makes for his profit; all the account he makes of Religion is, that he perceives by his books, and the inventory of his goods, that it turns every year to a good account: *Jobs* slander is the just charge of many, they use Religion but as a stalking horse, to catch worldly riches.

Fourthly, The grosse hypocrite often designes, that which is higher in the esteeme, and more taking upon the spirits of many then worldly riches, even worldly power, or to get very high, if not uppermost in the world. 'Tis no new thing for men to make religion a stayre to ascend the highest roomes among men, or a stirrup to get into the saddle of honour, and when they have got high enough, then downe with the stayres, or 'tis no matter for the stirrup by which they ascended. *Jehu* was very zealous in the cause of God, and for reformation, but his designe was for a kingdome, or his owne exaltation (2 *Kings* 10. 16.) he made a noyse of much piety, *Come see my zeale for the Lord*, yet all was but a piece of State-hypocrisie. His care in destroying *Ahabs* house and *Baals* Priests (according to the command of God) was but to pave the way to the throne. The same way *Absolom* was taking to his fathers Crowne; he told the people he was troubled that they were no better governed, that they had no quicker dispatch in their suites and businesses; he told his father he had made a vow, and desired the liberty of his absence from Court, that he might goe and performe it; all he pretended was righteousnesse and religion, yet he intended only to get an advantage to make his party strong, that so he might thrust his father out of the throne, and get up himselfe. He seemed a Saint while he meant to be a Traytor. The History of the Church reports of *Julian* the

Apostate

Socrates Hist: Ecclesiast: lib: 3. c. 1.

Apostate, that when his predecessor (being a Christian) held the Empire, he highly pretended the profession of Christ, and read a Gospel-Lecture in the Church of *Nichomedia*; yet while he was in shew a Christian, and in hope an Emperour, he was in heart a pagan. He saw the times served him not to act the pagan openly, and therefore he subtlely betooke himselfe to his disguise, and personated the Christian, even in the mortified way of a monasticke life, that he might smooth his way to the Empire. To which having once attained, he presently put off his disguise, and, to his utmost, disgraced and opposed the name and faith of Christ, which he had formerly owned and professed.

τότε δὴ καὶ τὴν ὑπόκρισιν τοῦ χριστιανίζειν φανερῶς ἀπεδύσατο.

Tandem simulationem professionis christianæ penitus deposuit. Socrat: ubi supra.

Thus I have touch't upon the foure grand designes of the Grosse hypocrite: First, praise among all men; Secondly, revenge upon some men; Thirdly, the gaine of worldly riches; Fourthly, the attainment of power, dominion, and Greatness in the world. These are as the foure wheeles of Satans chariot, wherein he hurrieth thousands to the land of darkness, while they would be esteemed children of the light. Or some one of these is as the (*primum mobile*) first mover (of which Philosophers speake in their doctrine of the heavens) carrying many with a rapt and violent motion in the spheare of religion, while they have in the Interim a secret undiscerned natural motion of their owne directly opposite to this, by which they hope at last to steale on faire and softly to their wished periods.

Having thus farre shewed the close purposes of the designing hypocrite, who is so hatefull to God and hurtfull to man, I shall a little discover and unmaske his hypocrisie, by shewing how we may know him, how we may looke through these vayles and see his ugly face.

Designing hypocrites are usually discovered these foure wayes.

First, By their affectation to be seene and taken notice of; they that will have praise and glory with men, must needs affect to be seene of men; for no glory comes to man, from men, but by what falls under the eye and observation of man. *Job* saith of *murderers* (Chap: 24. 13.) *They are of those that rebell against the light, they know not the wayes thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof.* The murderer cannot endure the light either natural or moral, because that tells who he is, or what he hath been about. The contrary, in one sense, is true of the hypocrite, he loveth the light,

light, and will doe nothing willingly, but as he may be taken notice of, and seene of men; as for those acts or exercises of religion, which are private retirements between God and his owne soule, he is a great stranger to them, he cannot delight in them, but any thing that may fall under publick observation, he can be forward enough in. Christ (*Math. 6. 5.*) gives us this plaine discovery of the hypocricall Pharisees; *They love to pray standing in the Synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seene of men.* This was so much in *Jehu's* heart, that he could not but blab it out with his tongue (2 *Kings* 10.) *Come see my zeale*; A false fire kindled his zeale, else he had not made such a blaze. It was, insincere rotten-hearted *Saul* that sayd (1 *Sam:* 15. 13.) *Come thou blessed of the Lord, I have performed the commandement of the Lord*; he was his owne trumpeter, and would needs tell the story of his doings himselfe, though he had done his businesse to halves; *Come thou blessed of the Lord, I have performed the commandement of the Lord*; as if it would not serve him to doe his duty, unlesse *Samuel* had seene and taken notice of him. *Abraham* gave proofe of the highest act of faith that ever was in the world, yet did *Abraham* say, *Come see my faith?* *Moses* led the people of *Israel* forty yeares in the wildernesse through a series of wonderfull tryalls and temptations, to the very borders of *Canaan* (which was one of the highest services that ever man undertook.) *and was faithfull in all his house* (Heb: 4. 2.) yet did he say, *Come see my fidelity?* *Joshua* victoriously expelled the *Cananites*, and divided their land by lot among the tribes of *Israel*, yet did he say, *Come see my fortitude?* We heare not a word of any of their doings from those who were sincere: When we see men forward to invite the approbation of others by making reports of their good deeds, it gives a strong argument of suspicion, that they have done what they have done with a bad heart, or, that (as it is sayd of *Jehu*) *they have not sought God with all their hearts.*

But some may object, Did not *Samuel* proclaime his own integrity before all the people (1 *Sam:* 12. 3.) *Whose oxe have I taken? or whose asse have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe, to blind mine eyes therewith?*

I answer; *Samuel* spake this to upbraid their ingratitude and dis-

diſcontent, not to extoll his owne juſtice; yea ſome conceive that he made this challenge, to give *Saul* a patterne how he ought to governe, rather then to commend his owne government. I find the Apoſtle *Paul* making large reports of his owne both doings and ſufferings (2 *Cor:* 11.) But if we peruſe that Chapter, we ſhall find him hovering in a ſuſpence of doubts and feares, whether or no it were convenient or comely for him to doe ſo. How many preambles and Apologyes did he make before he fell directly upon that unpleaſing ſubject? *Would to God ye could beare with me in my folly* (ſaith he) *and indeed beare with me.* And againe, *I ſpeake* (as it were) *fooliſhly in this confidence of boaſting.* And yet all that he ſpake was not to make a boaſt of himſelfe, but to vindicate his Apoſtleſhip from unjuſt and envious calumniations.

'Tis moſt certaine, He that is ſincere deſires not to be open, but ſilently ſatisfieth his ſoule with the conſcience of doing his duty, and takes more content, in knowing his own integrity, then in knowing that others know it. Vertue looſeth nothing of her value, in his eſteeme, no nor of her luſtre in his eye, becauſe ſhe is hidden from the eyes of men. Like the earth (in this poynt) he keepes his richeſt mineralls, and moſt precious gems of grace and goodneſs below in his bowells, or at the center of his heart, and will not let them be ſeene, till a kind of neceſſity diggs them out. When *Moſes* after his forty dayes neere acceſſe to and communion with God in the Mount, perceived that his face did ſhine (*Exod:* 34. 33.) he put a vayle upon it; every true *Moſes* whoſe acquaintance and fiduciall familiarity with God, hath ſtampt upon him the impreſſions of divine light, is ſo farre from affecting to dazzle the eyes of others with it, that he rather puts a vayle of gracious modeſty upon it; and will not let ſo much as the light of his good workes be ſeene, but as thereby (in which caſe Chriſt commands it (*Math:* 5. 16.) *He may gloriſie his father which is in heaven.* And herein a Chriſtian followeth the example of Chriſt, in whom though the Godhead dwelt bodily, yet he rarely ſhewed his divine power. And when once by a miracle, he had made the blind ſee, he alſo by command made them dumbe concerning that miracle (*Math:* 9. 30.) *See that no man know it.* It was our Saviours counſel to all his followers (*Mat:* 6. 5.) *Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth,* and it was his conſo-

conſolation to them in the next words; *Your father which ſeeth in ſecret, himſelfe ſhall reward you openly*; yea (which is a higher conſolation then that) *Himſelfe will be your reward.*

Secondly, As the deſigning hypocrite deſires to be ſeene in doing good, or to have the good which he hath done ſeene; ſo he is exceeding cenſorious and rigid towards thoſe whom he ſees falling into evill. Chriſt gives this diſcovery alſo (*Math:* 7. 3.) *Why beholdeſt thou the mote that is in thy brothers eye, but conſiderest not the beame that is in thine owne eye*; concluding at the 5th verſe; *Thou hypocrite* (why doth Chriſt call him hypocrite? ſurely becauſe he was ſo quick-ſighted to ſee a mote, that is, a ſmaller fault in his brothers eye, but tooke no notice of the beame that was in his owne eye; a ſpot upon his brothers coate, was cenſured more by him, then his owne wallowing in the mire. I doe not ſay that the Patriarke *Judah* was an hypocrite, but, as thoſe two other *Patriarks*, ſo he acted one very groſſe part of hypocriſie (*Gen:* 38. 24.) For he no ſooner heard that *Tamor* was with childe, but he cenſured, yea condemn'd her preſently to death; *Bring her forth* (ſayd he) *and let her be burnt*; and yet himſelfe was more faulty then ſhe. How hard a Judge was he of that crime in another, which was principally his owne? *Saul* had ſinned greatly (1 *Sam:* 13. 9.) in offering ſacrifice before *Samuel* came, which was an uſurpation of the Prieſts office, and ſo great a ſin that *Samuel* told him preſently, *God would therefore rend the Kingdome from him*; yet he thought to put it off with a ſlight excuſe. But in the 14th Chapter when *Jonathan* only offended againſt a raſh command of his (putting a Curſe upon that people if any did eate before the going downe of the Sun) he ſentenced him to death for it. In the 8th of *John*, How ſevere were the Phariſees to the woman taken in Adultery, they haled her before Chriſt, and preſſed the Law that ſhe ſhould be ſtoned to death; yet, when Chriſt ſayd (*v.* 7.) *He that is without ſin among you, let him firſt caſt a ſtone at her, they being convicted by their owne conſcience, went out one by one.* We ought to reprove and not flatter ſin in others; yet they who are extreamely ſevere againſt a ſin in others, uſually favour either the ſame or a worſe in themſelves. He that is ſincere, pittieth others, as much as reproves them, and he reproves them, though with ſharpneſs, yet with meekneſs, at once *conſidering himſelfe, leſt he alſo be tempted* (Gal: 6. 1.) and bleſſing God who hath

kept him in or from theſe temptations.

Thirdly, The deſigning hypocrite diſcovers himſelfe by laying downe or departing from the profeſſion of religion, when his worldly ends are attained. Feined zeale cooles or abates, is leſſe and leſſe towards the things of God, as ſuch zelots grow warmer and warmer in their neſts, and find their carnal intereſts more and more ſerved or ſecured. 'Tis reported by a Popiſh Author, that a Fryar or Monke was obſerved very preciſe, and circumſpect in all his wayes, hanging downe his head to the earth, very humbly and devoutly, as if he meditated continually upon his mortality, or returne to the earth; who afterwards being choſen Abbot or Governour of the Covent, grew very proud, high and inſolent. Some, wondring at this change of behaviour, tooke the boldneſs to aske him the reaſon of it; *O*, ſaid he, *I was but ſeeking the keyes of the Abbey, and now I have found them.* Having gotten what he ſought for, he layd aſide his ſtrictneſs in religion, and threw off his vayle. When *Jehu* that hypocrite was in his way to the Kingdome, how zealous was he? yet no ſooner ſetled in it, but he was unſetled in religion, & turned Idolater, worſhipping the Calves that were in *Dan* and *Bethel*. When *Julian* had obtained the Empire, he had done with Chriſt, and gave all the world a full argument againſt himſelfe, that he was but a hypocrite in his former profeſſion of Chriſtianity. *David* was as zealous for God and as holy when he was upon the throne, as when he kept ſheepe upon the Mountaines, as good when a princely traine followed him, as when he followed the Ewes great with young. *Moſes* was as faithfull when he was the ruler of *Iſrael*, as when he was an exile in *Midian*. *Joſeph* was as gracious when he wore a chaine of Gold, and had the power of all *Egypt* put into his hand, as when himſelfe was a priſoner in *Potiphers* houſe, and the iron (chaines) entred into his ſoule. *I feare God* (ſayd he, *Gen:* 42. 18.) when he had no man to feare. And when after his fathers death, his brethren feared he would reckon with them for their old faults, or at leaſt be careleſſe of and unkind to them, who had been ſo unkind and cruel to him, yet he would doe them nothing but kindneſſes and courteſies, and thereof bid them be confident, (*Gen:* 50. 21.)

Fourthly, As ſucceſſe diſcovereth ſome hypocrites, ſo the croſſe diſcovereth many more. The hypocrite will run from his colours when he comes to the battel, or ſeeth he muſt either quit the truths of God, or his owne peace. If once he findeth that he cannot thrive by religion, he will meddle no more with it. There is a generation who will appeare no further for truth, then ſerves their owne turne; and when they ſee they cannot ſerve that, by holding the truth, they will neither hold nor profeſſe it any longer. They will venter no further in ſuch matters, then they may make a faire retreate, if they ſee themſelves in danger, or cannot carry onne their owne intereſts. Thus the ſecond ground is deſcribed (*Math:* 13. 20, 21.) *He that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not roote in himſelfe, but dureth for a while, for when tribulation or perſecution ariſeth becauſe of the word, by and by he is offended.* He hath enough of the word, when he ſeeth he cannot have that, and enough of the world too. Many will get aboard the ſhip of the true Church in a calme, who if they ſee the clouds gather, the ayre darken, the winds riſing, the ſtorme coming, they dare not ride it out in an angry Sea, but will be calling for the boate, and row to the next ſhoare. Theſe never purpoſed to endure all winds and weathers, with the Church of God, but hoped to be tranſported to the *cape of their worldly good hope, and wiſhed for earthly haven.* Their flight interprets their intents, and liſts them among deſigning hypocrites. The houſe founded on the ſand, ſheweth as faire in a faire day, as that founded on a rocke; But when the raine deſcends, and the ſtouds come, and the winds blow, you may diſtinguiſh it, by the down-fall. He was never more nor better then a meere out-ſide profeſſor, who doth not hold faſt his profeſſion in a day of trouble as wel as in a day of peace; in the greateſt diſtreſſe, as wel as in the higheſt ſucceſſe and triumph of the people of God in this world.

To ſhut up this poynt and obſervation, I ſhall only give three or foure conſiderations, which may move all to take heed of hypocriſie. Chriſt ſaith (*Luke* 12. 1.) *Beware of the Leven of the Phariſees which is hypocriſie.* As Leven ſowres the whole lump of bread, ſo doth hypocriſie both the perſons and converſations of thoſe who are infected with it.

Firſt, Beware of hypocriſie, or of hiding what you are, for what you are, doth alwayes appeare to God, though not to men; *All things are naked and manifeſt unto the eyes of him with whom*

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we have to doe (Heb: 4. 13.) though we are painted over, though we are cloaked, and hooded, and vizarded with pretences, yet we are naked before the eye of God. And that was the argument with which God pressed *Abraham* to beware of hypocrisie (*Gen:* 17. 1.) *Walke before me and be thou perfect*; that is, remember thou art alwayes in my eye and sight, therefore take heed of falsenesse and insincerity. We use to say, *There is no halting before a Cripple*; Cripples know whether yours be a fained or reall lamenesse. O take heed of halting before God, he knoweth how it is with you, he knoweth the temper of your soules, as wel as the body of your conversations; he doth not only know what you doe, but with what aimes, with what heart and purpose you doe it. *Paul* sayd (1 *Thes.* 2. 5.) *We have not used a cloake of covetousnesse, God is witnesse.* As if he had sayd, God will quickly see through us, and find out our covetousnesse, though we cover it with never so thicke or faire acloake of devotional professions.

Secondly, Consider, as the Lord seeth through you, so he will make you throughly seene, he will make you knowne or unmaske you before men one time or other. As he will *bring forth the righteousnesse of a godly man as the light* (after it hath been long hid under the darknesse of uncharitable suspitions or false accusations) *and his just dealing as the noone day*, Psal: 37. 6.) so he will bring forth the unrighteousnesse of a hypocrite as the light, and his false-dealing as the noone-day, though it have layne hid a while under the cloake and faire colours of the most pious semblances and protestations. God loves to uncase hypocrites, because he is a God of truth; and because it magnifieth his truth, justice, and omniscience to do so. And he doth it many times, by letting them fall into foule sins; they make faire shewes in religion, through restraining grace, and as soone as that bridle of restraining grace is let loose, that very shew is gone, and they shew plainly what they are. *The closest designing hypocrites, often prove open Apostates*; and though some may abide long, (possibly as long as they live) in this vaine shew or forme of Godlinesse, without discovering their rottennesse, yet at last their rottennesse shall be discovered: for as *Solomon* assureth us (*Eccles:* 12. 14.) *God will bring every worke to Judgement, and every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evill.* Or as the Apostle hath it, (1 *Cor:* 4. 5.) *He*

He will discover the secrets of the heart, and bring to light the hidden things of darknesse; which, what are they, but the hypocriticall designings of men? We say, *murder will out*, and 'tis as true, *Hypocrisie will out.* The Lord many times brings it out to the shame of hypocrites in this life, and he will bring it out to the confusion of all their faces, in that great day, when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed.

Thirdly, Take heed of this designing hypocrisie; for as all who continue in it shall be discovered, so usually they continue in it; your plotting cunning hypocrites, are very rarely converted. Simple hypocrites (in the notion toucht before) are often converted; all unconverted persons that make any profession in religion are hypocrites, and many of them are simple ones, they hope all is well with them, and that they have grace, though they have it not, these are often converted, but gross designing hypocrites, of what rank or degree soever, are rarely converted. This is it which Christ said to the Pharisees, (*Matth.* 21. 31.) *Publicans and Harlots enter into the Kingdome of heaven before you*; Publicans were the worst sort of men, and harlots were the worst sort of women, yet these repented and received the Gospel sooner then the hypocritical Pharisees. The Evangelist made a like report of them (*Luke* 7. 29, 30.) *All the people* (that is, the common sort of people) *that heard him, and the Publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptisme of John, but the Pharisees and Lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him*; yea, as Christ speaks in the next words, they were piped to, but they would not dance; they were wept to, but they would not mourn. All those various dispensations of the Gospel were fruitless to them; neither a more pleasing nor a more severe Ministery won any thing upon that generation of designing hypocrites.

Fourthly, consider, As hypocrites are hateful to God, so God will deal with them accordingly; he will for ever separate them from his presence, and cast them out of his sight. A hypocrite hath a double minde, a divided heart; he is not half enough for God, (indeed he is nothing at all for God) and he is too much, yea altogether for himself, and therefore he shall have no hing at all of God, not so much as a sight of him. It is said in the 15th of *Job*, *The hypocrite shall not come before him*: Such as we hate, we

we cannot endure they should come in our sight: 'Tis a suitable judgement, that they who have so often come before God with false hearts, and mocked him with a seeming desire of being in his presence, should at last be thrust for ever out of his presence. 'Tis the portion of an hypocrite to have no portion in God, of whom he hath made such a boasting profession. When the worst of punishments is spoken of, it is called the hypocrites portion (*Matth.* 24. 51.) *Give them their portion with hypocrites in the Lake that burnes with fire and brimstone.* Hypocrites are spoken of as if they were the *free-holders of hell*, or as if all other sinners that shall goe to hell were but as inmates, and they the grand tenants of hell. Consider how miserable a thing it is to be an hypocrite, if this be the portion of hypocrites, to have no portion in God. And as they shall not reigne at all in the glory of the next world, so they are sometimes checkt (saith the text) from reigning in the glory of this world.

That the hypocrite reigne not.

Reigning, as was shewed before, being strictly taken, is the exercise of supreame power, and in a large sense may signifie the exercise of any power, or a state of great prosperity.

Hence note, Secondly.

Hypocrites are high minded, and look after great things.

David was a king, he reigned over *Israel*, but it was not his owne ambition, but the election of God, and his anointing, which brought him to the throne. He could say of himselfe (*Psal:* 131. 1.) *Lord my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither doe I exercise my selfe in great matters, or in things too high for me.* Though *David* was high in his person and state, yet his spirit was not high; nor was his spirit for high things, only God placed him on high. But here we see the hypocrite is climbing and getting to the top of the staires, he is ascending even to the throne. *Hypocrites are proud of that nothing which they have and are in spiritualls, and they would have all, they would get high, they would be highest in temporalls.* There are two lusts which usually reigne in hypocrites, and both of them respect the world.

First, The lust of covetousnesse, which is an inordinate desire of getting and keeping the riches of this world. The Pharisees all the

the Gospel over are taxed for hypocrites; and when Christ had preached that parable of the unjust Steward, concluding with this sentence, *Ye cannot serve God and Mammon*; The Evangelist telleth us (*Luke* 16. 14.) *The Pharisees also who were covetous, heard all these things, and they derided him.* Covetousnesse and hypocrisie goe together; They who have no true hungrings and thirstings after the things of heaven, are most hungry and thirsty after earthly things. We finde *Job* in the 27th Chapter of this Booke (*v.* 8.) speaking of the hypocrites gaine; *What is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soule*; which implyeth that the hypocrite is a great aimer at worldly gaine.

The second predominant lust of the hypocrite is, ambition, or desire of getting to the upper end of the world. Christ chargeth the hypocriticall Pharisees with this lust also (*Matth:* 23. 6. *Mark* 12. 39.) *They love the uppermost roomes at feasts, and the highest seats in the Synagogues.* They are all to be uppermost, they must have the uppermost roomes at feasts, and the highest seats in the Synagogue, both in Civill and Church-meetings, hypocrites affected superiority, or, *Diotrephes*-like, to have the preheminence, and (which was another symptome of ambition) *they* (saith Christ) *love greetings in the market place, and to be called Rabbi, Rabbi*, which is a title of greatness and mastership. Yea many hypocrites would not only have the uppermost seats at feasts, and in the Synagogues, but the very uppermost seats in Nations & Common-wealths; *They sometimes affect to be the head, who are worse then the tayle of all the people.* There are hypocrites of all ranks, and among all degrees of men, some of low degree are in a very high degree of hypocrisie; There are hypocrites in raggs and in russet, there are hypocrites also in scarlet and in purple; hypocrisie may reigne in and among those that reigne. It is a maxime which some Princes have held out to all the world, as the rule of their reigning; *He that knoweth not how to dissemble, knows not how to reigne.* Dissimulation is a great part of hypocrisie, there is dissimulation both as to the things of God, and the things of men; Some if they knew not how to dissemble in both (at least) with men, would not believe that they knew how to rule over, or governe men. Now as many who are great, and in power, make little conscience to dissemble, or make use of hypocrisie, to carry

Qui nescit dissimulare nescit regnare.

on their government, and ſecure themſelves; ſo moſt hypocrites have a mind, and will uſe all meanes (not forbearing thoſe which are bad enough) to get into power, and make themſelves great. The ſpirit of hypocriſie is an aſpiring ſpirit.

Againe, *Elihu* ſaith, *That the hypocrite reigne not, leſt the people be enſnared*; here's not one word of the good government or protection of the people, which ſhould be the maine buſineſſe of thoſe that reigne; The text ſpeaks only of ſnares; *That the hypocrite reigne not, leſt the people be enſnared.*

Hence obſerve; Thirdly.

Hypocrites getting into power, doe either ſecretly or openly wrong and oppreſſe the people.

They lay ſnares for them in ſtead of being ſhields to them. Hypocrites in power, enſnare chiefly two wayes.

Regis ad exemplum totus componitur orbis.

Firſt, By their ill example, there is a great ſnare in that; Inferiors are very apt to be formed up according to their mould and manners who are above them; the example of Kings and Princes are ſeldome unconformed to by their Subjects. There is a great power in example, what is done perſwades, as wel as what is ſpoken. And *the errors of thoſe that rule, become rules of error*; men ſin with a kind of authority, through the ſins of thoſe who are in authority. *Jeroboam made Iſrael to ſin*, not only by commanding them to worſhip the Calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*, but by commending that Idolatous worſhip to them in his owne practiſe and example.

Secondly, They enſnare the people by ſinfull and bad Lawes; The Prophet denounceth a woe diſtinctly unto men of ſeverall ranks and places (*Hoſ.* 5. 1.) *Heare ye this, O Prieſts, and hearken ye houſe of Iſrael, and give ye eare, O houſe of the King*; he directs his ſpeech, in that three-fold diviſion; Firſt, to the Prieſts; Secondly, to the body of the people; Thirdly, and chiefly to the houſe of the King, why to the houſe of the King? *Becauſe ye have been a ſnare on Mizpah, and a net ſpread upon Tabor.* That Scripture may be interpreted; Firſt, as an alluſion to ſuch as were wont to hunt upon thoſe mountaines; *Mizpah* and *Tabor* were famous places for hunting, there they were wont to ſet netts, and lay ſnares to catch their game; now, ſaith the Prophet, ye have been even like hunters ſpreading netts and laying ſnares. *Nimrod* is called

called a *mighty hunter before God*; He was a hunter of men more then of wild beaſts. Now, look what nets and ſnares are to wild beaſts, the ſame are ſinfull lawes to the conſciences of honeſt and upright-hearted men. And it is wel conceived that the Prophet there referrs to thoſe enſnaring Lawes made by *Jeroboam* and the ſucceeding Princes in the Kingdome of *Iſrael*, whereby they endeavoured to draw off the people of God from his true worſhip, and vexed thoſe who kept cloſe to it. Secondly, ſome expound thoſe words, *Ye have been a ſnare on Mizpah, and a net ſpread upon Tabor*, to ſignifie their ſetting ſpies upon thoſe mountaines to watch and ſo to give information, who went to the ſolemne feaſts, that ſo they might be proceeded againſt according to thoſe enſnaring Laws. Which way ſoever we take it, 'tis cleare, that Scripture reproves and threatens Judgement againſt the Prieſts and Apoſtatizing people of *Iſrael*, complying with if not provoking the the ruling powers to trouble thoſe who could not digeſt the Idolatrous worſhip ſet up by *Jeroboam* at *Dan* & *Bethel*, upon a politique conſideration, leſt the people going to *Jeruſalem*, ſhould fall off from him, and weaken the kingdome of *Iſrael* in his hand. Another Prophet complained (*Mic.* 6.16.) *The Statutes of Omri are kept. Omri* was a king of *Iſrael*, a ſucceſſor of *Jeroboam* both in his power and hypocriſie, he alſo pretended a zeale for the worſhip of God after his owne deviſing, and therefore made enſnaring Statutes to entangle thoſe that were ſincere, and perſevered in the true worſhip which the Statutes of God appoynted. The Prophet ſpeakes of a ſtrange kind of bridle, or of a bridle uſed for an unuſuall purpoſe (*Iſa.* 30. 28.) *There ſhall be a bridle in the jawes of the people cauſing them to erre.* A bridle is put upon the head of a horſe or mule, as *David* ſpeaks (*Pſal.* 32. 9.) not to cauſe either to erre or goe out of the way, but to keep them in the way. 'Tis evident by the context of this Chapter, as alſo by the expreſſe text of the 37th Chapter (*v.* 29.) that this bridle was the Lords power againſt *Senacharib* and his hoſt, whereby as with a bridle in their jawes he diverted them from their purpoſe of beſiedging *Jeruſalem*. 'Tis a truth alſo (to which we may warrantably enough apply thoſe words of the Prophet in a way of alluſion) that good lawes are like a bridle in the jawes of a people, the multitude or the moſt would elſe be like headſtrong horſes, if authority did not keep them in. 'Tis a great mer-

cy when Laws are as a bridle to keep us from erring, but 'tis sad when *any Lawes are a bridle in the jawes of a people causing them to erre*, or go out of the way of the Laws of God; such Laws are not (which all Lawes should be) rules, but snares. Such were the Lawes of *Jeroboam*, and the Statutes of *Omri* in Israel of old; and what Nation is there that hath not had experience in one age, or other, of such Lawes as have been a bridle in their jawes causing them to erre, or a snare to their souls and consciences?

Fourthly, When *Elihu* saith, *That the hypocrite reigne not, lest the people be ensnared*, he intends an act of divine wrath, upon hypocrites, abusing their power to the hurt of the people.

Hence Note.

God is highly displeased with Princes and Magistrates when they ensnare the people.

We read (*Isa.* 3. 12.) how the people of Israel were ensnared, and how the Lord was highly displeased with those who did ensnare them. *O my people, they which lead thee, cause thee to erre, and destroy the way of thy paths.* Thy Leaders mislead thee. There are two sorts of Leaders, First, Spiritual Leaders; the Ministers and Preachers of the Word now, as of old the Priests, Levites, and Prophets, were Leaders of the people (and sometimes proved their misleaders, *Jer.* 23. 13.) in Spirituals. Secondly, There are Leaders of the people in Civil things; such are all Princes and Magistrates. We may understand that Text in the Prophet *Isaiah*, of both these Leaders; as if he had said, *Thy Prophets and thy Princes mislead thee, and cause thee to erre*; And therefore at *ver.* 14. of the same chapter, God declareth his displeasure against them, professing that he would *enter into judgement with the Ancients of his people, and the Princes thereof.* The same Prophet *Isaiah* (chap. 9. 16.) complains of the same thing again; *The Leaders of this people cause them to erre, and they that are lead of them are destroyed.* The Hebrew is, *they that bless this people*, (so we put it in the margin,) The Leaders of the people were so called, either because it was a part of their office, to pronounce the blessing upon the people; or because the false Prophets used to sooth up the people in their sins; and (as another Prophet hath it) to sow pillows under their elbows, as if they were in a very blessed condition, and should do well enough, notwithstanding

ing all the clamours of the true Prophets against them. And so the latter words, *they that are led of them*, are suitable to the former in the Hebrew, being thus read in the margin, *they that are called blessed of them*; that is, declared or assured by them to be in the right way, and so such as should come to a blessed end, though indeed their end proved destruction. And if they who are misled (or called blessed) fall into destruction, surely their misleaders (who call them blessed) shall not escape. *If the blinde lead the blinde, both fall into the ditch*, (Matth. 15. 14.) only the blinde leader, or misleader, shall fall deepest into it.

Fifthly, Observe.

As God is displeased with the hypocrite when he useth his power to ensnare the people, so the Lord sometimes puts him besides his power, or takes his power from him, that he may no longer ensnare the people.

The ultimate scope of the place, is not only to shew the Lord displeased with the hypocrite, but displacing him. When the Prophet had summon'd all sorts, Priests, and people, and the house of the King, he addes, *Judgement is towards you, because ye have been a snare upon Mizpah*, (Hos. 5. 1.) Thus as God pulls down hypocrites, because they are hateful to himself, so because they are hurtful to others; hurtful to their Civil Liberties, and worldly Interests, over which God is tender; hurtful also to their spiritual Liberties, and soul Interests, over which God is more tender. The Kings of Israel (who were very wicked, and did much ensnare the people) went off their Governments, most of them, very speedily, God did not let them reigne long; yea, the whole Kingdom of Israel (which had not one good King) was dissolved long before the Kingdom of Judah, which had many good Kings. God did not suffer the hypocritical Kings of Israel to hold their power, but gave them into the hand of the King of Assyria, (2 *Kings* 17. 6.) because (*vers.* 8.) *they walked in the statutes of the heathen, and of the Kings of Israel, which they had made.*

From the whole verse I would give one Note by way of Corrolary.

A hypocrite is of all persons most unfit for publick service.

How unfit is he to have power in his hand, who can use it no better,

better, then for the ensnaring of the people? A hypocrite is of a private spirit, he is all for himself, and therefore most unfit for publick trust. We may say of the hypocrite, as the Prophet (*Ezek.* 15. 3.) of the Vine, *Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work? or, will men take a pin of it, to hang a vessel thereon?* No, it is not fit for that mean purpose or service, much less would a man take a Vine to hew a beam or a pillar for a house out of it. Magistrates are as pillars of the house, or like great beams, to hold up and fasten all; the hypocrite is so far from being fit Timber to make a pillar of the house, that he is not fit to make a pin to hang a vessel on upon the wall. *Power is never so improperly employed as in making snares*, and yet that's the usual employment or improvement which hypocrites, high or low, put it to.

I have thus far opened the Text, and given these Notes from it, according to our reading; yet before I pass from it, I shall minde you of another reading or version of this whole verse, which carryeth the sence quite into another channel. Thus

Who (meaning God) *maketh* (or suffereth at least) *the hypocrite to reigne, because of the offences or sins of the people.* The *Chaldee Paraphrase*, the *Septuagint*, and *Vulgar Latine* agree in this, and the dependance (for clearing of it) may be made out thus.

Elihu having shewed in the 29th verse, that if *God giveth quietness, none can make trouble*; and that *if he hideth his face, none can behold him, whether it be done against a Nation, or against a man only*, proceeds in this verse to shew the justice of God in punishing the people, by putting power into the hypocrites hand.

The learned *Mercer*, I grant, is not satisfied with this rendring, as not being so sutable to the Grammatical construction of the Hebrew Text; yet, holding the first, he makes this as a consequent of it; confessing that it may be taken in this sense; *That the hypocrite reigne not who did once reigne, because of the sins of the people*; and so it intimates the sins both of the Prince and people. Thus both readings correspond, and are not repugnant but subservient to each other. For if God suffer not the hypocrite to reigne any longer, 'tis an argument that for a time he suffered him to reigne for the sins of the people, that is, to be an instrument of his wrath and vengeance upon them for their sins. The same word signifies both *a snare*, and sin; a snare set by others, and an offence or sin committed by our selves; and well it may, seeing

Qui regnare facit hominem hypocritam propter offendicula populi. Vulg.

Constituens regem hominem delatorem propter scandala quæ in populo. Chald.

Non sunt ita repugnantes hæ interpretationes, quin una ex altera consequatur. Nam si non sinit Deus diutius regnare hypocritam, certe aliquandiu sinit; dat enim reges in iram. Merc.

seeing nothing doth more ensnare us then our own sins. And as some are led into sin by the snares which others lay for them; so very many by sinning bring themselves into snares: and usually when a people have entangled themselves in the snares of sin, God sets evil men at once to rule over them and entangle them with the snares of those sufferings which are most proper to their sins.

Βασιλεύων ἄνθρωπον ὑποκειτὴν ἀπὸ δυσκολίας λαῶν.

Forte interpretes pro ממלך *cum punctis olim vocalibus dedissent legerunt* ממלך *regnare faciens.* Drus.

And thus 'tis conceived *Elihu* answers those expostulating demands which *Job* puts (*chap.* 21. 7.) *Wherefore do the wicked live? become old? yea, are mighty in power?* Here are three questions, First, *Why do they live?* they are not worthy to breathe. Secondly, *Why become they old?* they deserve to be cut off in their youth, and not to live out half their dayes. Thirdly, *Why are they mighty?* Why do they command all, who use their might only to do mischief? *Elihu* answers these questions in a word, God giveth power into the hands of evil men, because of the sins of the people. As if he had said, if at any time you see the wicked in great power and prosperity, 'tis a signe the people are very wicked, and God will punish and scourge them by the hands of such for their wickedness.

מחקש *Ne sint offendicula, quidam, propter offendicula populi. Nam* מן *etiam propter significat.* Drus. *Possit & ita accipi, ne regnet homo hypocrita, qui quidem regnabat ob offendicula populi, ut utriusque & Regis & populi delictum notetur.* Merc.

This is a truth, and much is said by some Interpreters for the making of it out from the Text; but taking it as 'tis given, I shall only give you two Notes from it.

First, *Bad Princes are set up by the permission, yea disposition of God.*

He makes evil men to reigne. The same power which brings wicked men into the world, sets wicked men high in the world. It is of God that any wicked man hath a place in the world, and it is of God that any wicked man gets into the high places of the world. All the Kings of Israel from first to last were stark naught, and very wicked, yet they were all of God's setting up, though their own ambition, or the satisfying of some lust, put most of them upon aspiring to get up. In the first book of the Kings (*chap.* 11. 29, 30, 31.) *Ahijah the Prophet finding Jeroboam* (the first and worst of them) *in the way, caught the new Garment that was on him, and rent it into twelve pieces, and he said unto Jeroboam, take thee ten pieces; for thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, behold, I will rend the Kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten Tribes*

Cujus jussu homines nascuntur hujus jussu & reges constituuntur, apti his qui in illo tempore ab ipsis regnantur. Irenæ. l. 5. c. 24.

Tribes to thee. This *Jeroboam* was so bad a man, that he was not content to sin alone, *but made Israel to sin*; yet even him did God set up, and sent a Prophet to him to tell him so. How unholy soever men are in their place, and how unjust soever in the exercise of their power, yet the holy and just God (for reasons known to himself) placeth them in power.

Secondly, Observe.

God permits wicked Princes to reigne, as a punishment of the reigning sins and wickednesses of the people.

Quidam reges ad utilitatem subjectorum dantur & conservationem justitiæ quidam autem ad pœnam Dei justo judicio in omnibus æqualiter superveniente. Irene. l. 5. c. 25.

The power of wicked Princes is the punishment of a wicked people. Some Princes and Magistrates are given as a blessing, for the protection, peace, and profit of a Nation, and for the exaltation of righteousnes in it. Others are given as a curse, for the vexation, trouble, and impoverishing of a Nation. The Lord takes this fully upon himself, (*Hos.* 13. 11.) *I gave them a King in mine anger*, &c. Angry providences are the fruit of sin. God gave *Saul* in anger, he gave *Jeroboam* and the rest of the Israelitish Kings in anger; and as he gave them in anger, so he took them away in wrath. The sins both of Princes and people, produce mutual ill effects towards one another.

First, The sins of the people are the cause sometimes why good Princes are immaturely or suddenly taken away from them. *Josiah* that good King was removed very early for the sin of *Judah*; *Pharaoh Necho* had never slain him, had not the people been unworthy of him. Hence that of *Solomon*, (Prov. 28. 2.) *for the transgression of a land, many are the Princes thereof:* He means not (as I conceive) many together, but many successively, that is, good Princes go quickly off the stage one after another for the transgression of the people of the land; *But* (as it followeth in the same verse) *by a man of understanding & knowledg the state thereof shal be prolonged.* Our Translaters render these latter words in the plural number (as the margin hath it) *by men of understanding & wisdom shall they likewise be prolonged*; that is, when there are many godly, wise, and understanding men in a Nation, God blesseth them with long-lived and aged good Kings or Governours.

Secondly, Whole Nations or a people are sometimes punished for the sins of their Princes, (*Jer.* 15. 4.) the Lord tells the Jewish state he would bring all that evil upon them for the sin of *Manasseh.*

Manasseh. The sins of Princes prove oftentimes the sufferings of the people. As both by and for their goodnes and vertues a people are blessed, so by and for their evills, errors, and vices, a people are endangered, yea sometimes ruined: When the Head of a Kingdome or Common-wealth is sicke, the Body is seldome well.

Regum lapsus pœna populorum est; sicut enim eorum virtute servamur; ita eorum errore periclitamur.

Thirdly, The sins of a people bring destruction both upon their Princes and themselves together, and wrap all up in one ruinous heape, as *Samuel* threatned the people of *Israel* (1 *Sam.* 12. 25.) *If ye still doe wickedly, ye shall be destroyed both you and your King.* He speakes not a word of any sin in their King, but tells them that their wickednesse may bring destruction not only upon themselves, but upon him also.

Quid enim possit habere corpus reipublicæ capite languido.

Fourthly, (which is the poynt in hand) the sins of a people cause the Lord to set evill Princes over them. When once a people refuse the sweet and easie yoke of Christ, or say, *we will not have this man to rule over us*, he in Judgement sends such to rule over them, as shall lay heavy yokes upon them indeed. God useth some Princes as his staff to support a people, and as his shield to defend a people, yea as his Sun to cherish and influence them with aboundance of mercies. He useth others only as his sword to wound them, or as his scourge to correct them for their sin. Some are a blessing, others are an affliction to the people. An ancient Poet observing the City wherein he lived, swolne with vanity, and bringing forth dayly many monstrous births of pride, luxury, and oppression, he could not forbeare to give his apprehension of the issue in this elegant fancy; *This City* (said he) *is with child, and I am afraid it will bring forth shortly* (and what will it bring forth?) *some severe corrector of your evill insolencies.* When *Phocas* (a cruel tyrant) had got the Empire, and reigned, there was a good man, who prayed much, about him, and did even expostulate with God, why he would set such a wretch as he was over the Empire; the story saith, he received this answer from God; *I therefore set him to governe, because I could not finde a worse.* And I finde a like report of another, though in a lower degree of power, yet in great power, wherein carrying himselfe very insolently, one sayd to him; *Why are you thus haughty and high-minded, why so proud of your power, God did not put you into the goverment of this place, because you were worthy of it, but be-*

Uterum fert civitas hæc, timeo autem ne pariat, virum Correctorē malæ insolentiæ vestræ. Theogn: *Cur Domine Phocam imperatorem constituisti? responsum datum, quia non inveni pejorem. Cur superbis? non es creatus Episcopus, quod dignus sacerdotio sis, sed quod civitas tali digna erat Episcopo.* Anast.

Deus quibuſdã mãis tanquam carnificibus uſus eſt, ad ſumendum de aliis pœnas: quod verum eſſe de pleriſq; tyrannis arbitror; Tale medicamentum fuit Argentinis Phalaris, Mario Romanis. Plutarch: de ſera Num: Vindicta. *Etiam talibus (Neroni ſcilicet) dominandi poteſtas non datur niſi ſummi dei providẽtia, quando res humanas judicat talibus dominis dignas.* Aug: lib: 5. de Civ: dei. cap. 19.

Deus cauſe we were worthy to have a man of your worthleſneſs ſet over us. The learned Moraliſt treating of the righteous, though late vengeance of God upon men, hath this paſſage; *God* (ſaith he) *uſeth ſome men as tormentors to afflict and puniſh others. Which is verified in moſt tyrants. Such a bitter medicine was* Phalaris *in his time to the* Argentines, *and* Marius *to the* Romanes. St *Auguſtine* ſpeaking of *Nero*, maketh this concluſion; *The power of Government is not given, no not to ſuch, but by the providence of the moſt high God, when he judgeth the affaires or manners of mankinde juſtly deſerve and call for ſuch Lords and Maſters.*

O let nations take heed; The ſins of a people, are the worſt ſnares of a people; ſin provokes God to ſet up Princes for a ſnare. As therefore the Pſalmiſt admoniſheth Princes, *Be wiſe now therefore O ye Kings, and learned ye Judges of the earth*; ſo I may ſay, *Be wiſe, O ye people, and obedient all you that are inhabitants of the earth, ſerve the Lord with feare, and rejoyce before him with trembling, kiſſe the Son* (ſubmit to Jeſus Chriſt) *leſt he be angry*, and give you ſuch Princes and Powers, or put you into ſuch hands as ſhall break and vex you to purpoſe, and make you know what it is to ſerve men in rigour, having refuſed to ſerve God in love. Many in all nations are apt to complaine much, when they have any burdens upon them by Governours, but few complaine of their owne ſins, which cauſe God to burden nations with ſuch Governours; let all leave off complaining of evill Governours, and complaine more of their owne evill government, both of their hearts and lives.

Thus we ſee how this text according to theſe diſtinct tranſlations, Firſt, gives warning to Princes, *That the hypocrite reigne not, leſt the people be enſnared*; and, Secondly, gives warning to people, that they provoke not God by their ſcandalous offences, to ſet wicked Princes and Powers over them.

JOB,

JOB. Chap. 34. Verſ. 31, 32.

Surely it is meete to be ſaid unto God, I have borne chaſtiſement, I will not offend any more.

That which I ſee not, teach thou me: if I have done iniquity, I will doe no more.

Elihu having convinced *Job*, both of the power of God, to doe what he pleaſeth, and alſo of his righteouſneſſe, that he is juſt in whatſoever he pleaſeth to doe, proceedeth to give him counſell, how to carry himſelfe better towards God, then by his former ſpeeches and expoſtulations (hinted at the 5th verſe of this Chapter) he ſeemed to have done. In theſe two verſes he gives him (according to our tranſlation) counſell conſiſting of three branches.

Firſt, He counſells him to a due ſubmiſſion, to the hand of God. In the former part of the 31th verſe; *Surely it is meete to be ſaid unto God, I have borne chaſtiſement.*

Secondly, He counſells him to reformation, or to a gracious reſolution of laying downe every ſinfull thing, or what ever was a provocation to God. This he doth once and againe, twice in theſe two verſes; Firſt, in the cloſe of the 31th verſe; *It is meete to be ſayd unto God, I will not offend any more*; Secondly, in the cloſe of the 32d verſe; *If I have done iniquity, I will doe no more.*

Thirdly, *Elihu* counſells *Job*, to pray for further diſcoveries, both of his ſins, and ſinfullneſſe, as alſo of his duty, at the beginning of the 32d verſe; *That which I ſee not teach thou me.* Thus you have the diſtinct poynts of that counſell which *Elihu* gives *Job*, according to our reading of theſe words. There is another reading, which I ſhall touch, when I have firſt opened and proſecuted the words as they ſtand in ours.

Verſ. 31. *Surely it is meete to be ſayd unto God, I have borne chaſtiſement; I will not offend any more.*

Theſe are child-like words, ſuch words as a faulty, yet a ſubmit-

mitting repenting childe, speakes to a displeased father, when he is under his rod, (yet such as become the most aged and growne men in grace) I *have borne chastisement*, I have been under thy correcting hand, forgive me O my father, I will doe so no more. Thus *Elihu* adviseth *Job*, to bespeak God his father while he was afflicting him.

Some render the former part of this verse, by way of interrogation, or question, *Hath he sayd unto God, I have borne chastisement, I will offend no more?* hath *Job* spoken thus to God? As if *Elihu* (making his appeale to the by-standers) had sayd, *Ye all are witnesses that Job hath not yet humbled himselfe under the correcting hand of God, but rather charged God with severity, in dealing with him, and over-boldly enquired into the reason of his dealings.* Our affirmative translation carrieth the same sense with this interrogative, and questioning translation; for when *Elihu* saith to *Job*, *It is meete to be sayd unto God, I have borne chastisement*; he supposeth, that *Job* had not sayd so.

Surely it is meete to be sayd unto God.

כי The Hebrew particle which we render *surely*, commonly signifieth, *for*, as giving an account or reason, of somewhat that went before; yet we render it well both here, and elsewhere, *surely*, according to the scope of the place; especially seeing *Elihu* speaking thus, is not giving a reason of what was sayd before, but inferring a duty from it.

Againe, The word *meete*, is not expresly in the Hebrew text, yet it is clearly implyed in it, and therefore added by our translators to fill up, and cleare the sense; the originall is, *It is to be sayd unto God*, we say, *It is meete to be sayd unto God*,

I have borne chastisement.

The word *chastisement* also is not expresly in the original, there it is only, I *have borne*, but because *bearing* must needs import, that somewhat is borne as a burthen, and seeing according unto the subject matter that *Elihu* is upon with *Job*, it must referre to some affliction or chastisement laid upon him, therefore we fitly supply this word *chastisement*, *It is to be sayd unto God*, I *have borne*; what? (it cannot be meant of any outward corporall burthen, or visible loade layd upon his back; but, I *have borne*) chastisement, affliction, or correction; *It is meete to be sayd unto God, I have borne chastisement*; that is, I both have and will beare, whatsoever thou hast, or shalt be pleased to lay upon me; I will not dispute thy burthens, but take them up. So then, this first part of the verse is a direction ministred to *Job*, shewing him how to behave himselfe in the bearing of affliction; He must not strive or struggle with them, nor with God about them, but sustaine them. And this direction is not peculiar to *Job's* person, or to his case alone, but it belongs to all that are in affliction, let their case be what it will; all such ought to beare quietly or patiently to abide under the burthen which God layeth upon them. I shall not stay upon the opening of the speciall signification of that word *chastisement*, because it is not in the Hebrew text, only thus, chastisements are usually taken for those afflictions, or afflicting providences, which God layeth upon his owne children; he layeth judgements upon the wicked, and punishments upon the ungodly, but properly, and strictly, that which falls upon his owne people is called *chastisement*. For though in Scripture, there are dispensations of God towards his owne people, spoken of under the notion of judgement, yet they have not a proper sense of judgement, as proceeding from wrath, and intended for revenge. Wrath is the spring from whence judgements flow, and as to their issue, they tend to the satisfaction of Justice. This God doth not expect, at the hands of his owne children, and therefore their afflictions are most properly called chastisements, *Surely it is meete to be sayd unto God, I have borne chastisement.*

Hence note.

It is our duty when the hand of God is upon us, or when we are under chastisements, to speake humbly, meekly, and submissively to God.

We ought alwayes to be humble, and carry it humbly towards God, but then especially when God by any afflicting providence is humbling us. The Prophet (*Hos.* 14. 2.) calling that people to returne unto the Lord, adviseth thus; *Take with you words, and turne to the Lord, say unto him, take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously, so will we render the calves of our lips.* As *Elihu* here makes a kinde of directory, what a person in affliction should say unto God, *It is meete to say unto God*, that is, for a man in thy case, to

to ſay thus unto God; ſo that Prophet, by the Spirit, ſaith, *Take unto you words, and turne to the Lord*, and ſay or ſpeake thus unto him; though not ſtrictly, ſyllabically, in ſo many words, yet to this ſence, and purpoſe, or according to this tenour, ſpeak thus, *Take away iniquity, and receive us graciouſly*. And when the Prophet ſaith, *Take unto you words*, his meaning is not that they ſhould affectedly ſtudy a forme of words for God, much leſſe that they ſhould artificially counterfeit words which their hearts had not conceived, or were not correſpondent to their hearts, (many ſpeake words, even to God, which never come neare but are meere ſtrangers to the intents of their hearts) but ſincere words, humble words, words of ſupplication, not expoſtulating words, not quarrelling words, not murmuring words, not meere complaining words, but take to you words of confeſſion, and ſubmiſſion, and ſo preſent your ſelves and your condition before the Lord. The Preacher (*Eccleſ:* 12. 10.) *ſought to finde out acceptable words*, and ſo ſhould we when we ſpeake unto men; Preachers of the word ſhould ſeeke to finde out acceptable words; not fine words, not ſwelling words of vanity, not flattering ſoothing words, but *acceptable words*, that is, ſuch as may finde eaſie paſſage into the heart; or ſuch words as may make their paſſage into the heart, through the power of the Spirit of God. Now if the Preacher ſought to finde out acceptable words, when he ſpake to the people, much more ſhould we when we ſpeak to God. O how ſhould we labour then to finde out acceptable words. All words are not fit to be ſpoken unto God; the words that are (in ſuch caſes as the text ſpeakes of) may be reduced to theſe two heads.

Firſt, They muſt be *God juſtifying words*, that is, words by which we acquit the Juſtice of God, how ſore, and how heavy ſoever his hand is upon us. When *Daniel* (Chap: 9. 7, 14.) was laying before the Lord the calamitous ſtate of that people (they were under as ſore judgements as ever nation was, *For under the whole heavens* (ſaith he there) *hath not been done, as God hath done unto Jeruſalem*) yet all the words he ſpake unto God, tended unto the juſtification of God; *O Lord* (ſaid he) *righteouſneſſe belongeth unto thee, but unto us confuſion of faces, as at this day, to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jeruſalem*, &c. We have not had one ſtroake more, then we have deſerved, there hath not been a grain of weight more in our burthen, then we have brought

brought upon our ſelves, there hath not been a drop in our cup more then we have given juſt cauſe for, *Therefore hath the Lord watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us, for the Lord our God is righteous in all his works, which he doth, for we obeyed not his voice*; theſe are words fit to be ſpoken unto God.

Secondly, We are to take to our ſelves *ſelf-condemning, ſelf-abaſing, ſelf-emptying words*. Such we finde in that chapter, (*v.* 5, 6, 7.) *To us belong ſhame, and confuſion of face*, &c. theſe are the words we ſhould take to our ſelves, and thus it is meet to be ſaid unto God, whenſoever his chaſtiſements are upon us.

Secondly Obſerve.

It is our duty to acknowledge it to God, that he hath chaſtened us, when he hath.

We muſt own his hand in afflicting us, as much as in proſpering us, in caſting us down, as much as in lifting us up, in wounding us, as much as in healing us; It is meet to be ſaid unto God, we have born chaſtiſement, thy hand hath been upon us. The neglect of, or rather obſtinacy againſt this, is charged as a great ſin (*Iſa.* 26. 17.) *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not ſee*; that is, they will not acknowledge thy moſt eminent appearances in anger againſt them. 'Tis ſo with many at this day, though there be a hand of God (as it were) viſibly afflicting their bodies, and eſtates, their children and families; yet they will not ſee, that it is a hand of God; but ſay as the Philiſtines, *it is a chance*, or, it is our ill fortune; it is from the negligence of this man, or from the malice of that other man. All this while there is no acknowledgement of the hand of God. They ſay not with *Eli*, (1 Sam. 3. 18.) *It is the Lord*; nor with *David*, (Pſal. 39. 9, 10.) *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, becauſe thou didſt it; Remove thy ſtroke away from me, I am conſumed by the blow of thine hand. It is as much our duty, and for the glory of God, to confeſs that our afflictions are of God, as our mercies and favours.*

Thirdly Obſerve.

The chaſtenings of God muſt be born, they muſt be endured.

Many are chaſtiſed who cannot ſay they have born chaſtiſements; It's an ordinary thing to be under chaſtiſement, but its a great thing and requires much holy skill and ſpiritualneſs to bear a chaſtiſe-

ment

ment; the duty of a Christian lies most in two points.

First in doing, or in active obedience.

Secondly in suffering, or in passive obedience, and there is as much of God, as much of grace, as much of holiness, yea I may say much more held out in bearing and in suffering, then there is in acting or in doing.

But you will say, what is it *to bear*, that you make it so difficult a matter to bear chastisements? How must chastisements be born? or what is it to bear them?

I will answer the question under two heads. First, Negatively, To bear chastisement is not

First, meerly to finde or feel it upon our shoulders as a burthen which pincheth or presseth us; so a beast may bear.

Secondly, it is not a bearing meerly because we cannot help it, or be rid of our burden, for so the worst of men may bear; they bear the greatest burthens that God layeth upon them, because they cannot avoid them, nor ease themselves of them.

Thirdly, It is not a bearing stoutly, or slightingly, to make nothing of it; so proud men bear, men of unsubdued spirits unto God, and his word, regard not what they bear, nor what God doth to them.

Fourthly, It is not a bearing them sowrly or sullenly; for so discontented persons bear; yea, so the devil beareth the burthen which the hand of God hath laid upon him.

Fifthly, Nor is it a bearing chastisement faintly or dispondingly; so weak believers bear. *To bear and faint, is not the bearing of faith.* Neither of these are the bearing of chastisement which *Elihu* intends in this counsel, when he saith, *It is meet to be said unto God, I have born chastisment.* Thus ye see the Negative, what the bearing of it is not?

Secondly, I answer affirmatively, To bear a chastisement as an act or work of grace, is

First to bear it *sensibly*; that is, feeling the weight of the hand of God, and tasting the bitterness of that cup of sorrow which he giveth us to drink.

Secondly, 'Tis a bearing of it submittingly, humbly, patiently, laying our selves down at the foot of God, and saying, as *Eli* did, *Let him do what seemeth him good*; or as *David*, (2 Sam. 15.26.) *Behold, here I am, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him.* We never

never bear any evil of affliction well, till we can say (with a sweet resignation of our selves) to God, do with us what seemeth to thee good. And (for our encouragement I may say) nothing can hurt a godly man which seemeth good to God.

Thirdly, 'Tis a contentful bearing, or a bearing contentedly; Thus Christ spake (*Psal.* 40. and 'tis cited by the Apostle *Heb.* 10.) *Lo, I come to do thy will, I am content to do it*; what was that? It was to bear or suffer; the greatest part of what Christ was to do, was to bear or surfer *the chastisement of our peace*, (Isa. 53.5.) and in suffering to be made a sacrifice for us; his contentment to do the will of God, was a contentment to suffer. Of such a spirit should the people of God be; bearing chastisement not only patiently, but contentedly; this is hard, but this cannot be left out in the full exercise of that grace.

Fourthly, 'Tis to bear it (more then contentedly) willingly; how free was Christ to bear, when he said (*John* 18. 11.) *The cup which my father hath given me, shall I not drink it?* Surely I will, I am willing to drink it, though it be a bitter cup. We are not to will our sufferings, but to suffer them willingly; there is a vast difference between these two; I do not say we are to will our sufferings, but we are to suffer them willingly; we must suffer what, and how, and when, and how long God will; and when God willeth our sufferings, we must suffer with our wills, or be willing to suffer.

Fifthly, To bear chastisement in the sence here intended, is not only to bear it with our will, but with our affections, not only willingly, but acceptably, and embracingly; 'tis to say *welcome cross*, because it is the will of God. There is no chastisement that we can rejoyce in, or have any affection to, considered in it self, but to bear chastisement in contemplation of the will of God, should work our hearts to an accepting, to an embracing, to a welcoming of it; we should say to all our sufferings, welcome, by the will of God.

Sixthly, 'Tis to bear it prayerfully; we must bear silently in opposition to complaining; but we must not bear silently in opposition to praying. While chastisement is upon our backs, supplications must be in our mouths; and we must pray, first, That we may see the reason why or for what cause God chasteneth us: Secondly, We must pray, that we may answer the ends which God

aimeth at in chastening us. Thirdly, That we may have fresh power to bear his chastenings. Fourthly, That God would be pleased to remove our chastenings. While we bear chastenings, we may pray, and pray hard that God would take them away. *David* had no sooner said, *I opened not my mouth*, (that is, complainingly) *because thou didst it* (Psal. 39. 9.) but presently he openeth his mouth in prayer (*vers.* 10.) *Remove thy stroke away from me.* While we bear our cross patiently and willingly, it would be our sin not to pray for deliverance from it. To say I am under a chastisement, and let the Lord keep it upon me as long as he will, I will never ask him to take it off, were a most unbecoming frame of spirit. They that bear affliction most cheerfully, should pray most earnestly to be eased of it; we must be willing to bear them alwayes, yet we must pray that we may not bear them long. If a childe under the rod of a parent, should not say, *pray father stay your hand, it is enough*, but let him go on striking, and never intimate a desire of his forbearance, this were a signe of stubbornness, not of patience and submission. 'Tis as bad not to ask release from our troubles, as to murmure at them, or to be unquiet under them. Remember then, you must be as much in the exercise of prayer as of patience under the cross, and that in these four respects. Thus you have the answer to that question; by which it appears, that 'tis no easie matter to say what *Elihu* saith, *It is meet to be said unto God, I have born chastisement?*

There is yet another question, (for some may demand) why should chastisements be thus born? I answer,

First, We must bear them according to all the rules before given, because they come from God. Our afflictions are Gods allotment, we must bear what he appoints: therefore old *Eli*, though he had failed, and sinned greatly, and so brought a cloud of calamity upon himself and his family (the very report whereof, as *Samuel* told him, would make both ears of every one that heard it, to tingle) yet he composed his spirit to a submissive hearing of it, upon this single consideration, *It is the Lord*, and there is enough in that consideration to make all men submit. For first, The Lord is supream, and therefore what he doth must be born. Secondly, He is *a Father*, a childe must bear what a Father layeth upon him; and as the Lord is a father, so he is not a hasty, imprudent, or passionate father, but a most wise and judicious father; therefore 'tis our

our interest as well as our duty to bear his chastisements. Yea, he is a gracious, tender, and compassionate father, and when we know he that layeth a hand of affliction upon us, hath also a heart full of compassion towards us, we should willingly bear his hand.

Secondly, Chastisements are to be born in the manner directed, because they are for our good, and shall we not bear what is good for us? *It is good for me* (said *David*, Psal. 119. 71.) *that I have been afflicted*; and so the Apostle (*Heb.* 12. 10.) *For they verily for a few dayes, chastened us after their own pleasure, but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.* Chastisements are for our profit, and shall not we bear that which is for our profit? If God should lay chastisements on us for our hurt, meerly to vex us, & so put us to pain, or meerly because he delights in our sufferings, who could bear them? But it is meet to bear what God layes upon us, because he doth it for our good and profit.

Thirdly, We must bear chastisements in the manner shewed, because unless we bear them so, they will do us no good, or we shall have no profit by them, and that's a misery indeed. To bear smart, and finde no advantage coming in by it; to drink gall, and to have no sweetness come out of it; to endure loss, and to have no kinde of profit by it is very grievous. Now whatever chastisement is laid upon any, it doth them no good, and they can have no profit by it, unless they bear it as was before described; it is not the bare being afflicted, that doth us good, but it is the wise management, or the skilful bearing of it that doth us good; and therefore we finde, that the Apostle (*Heb.* 12. 11.) when he had said, *There is no affliction joyous for the present, but grievous*, adds, *Nevertheless afterwards it yeildeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness*, (but to whom? What to every one that is afflicted, have they these sweet fruits? No, but) *to them that are exercised thereby.* Afflictions bring no sweet fruits to them that have them, unless they be exercised by them: how exercised? Afflictions exercise every one that hath them; they are to all a passive exercise, but to be exercised, notes here an active exercise; they who graciously exercise themselves in affliction, shall without doubt finde benefit and fruit by affliction.

But some may say, what is it to be thus exercised by affliction? I answer (for the opening of that Scripture) to be exercised, is,

First, To be much in searching our own hearts, and wayes, or how 'tis with us, and what hath been done by us, (*Eccles.* 7.14.) *In the day of adversity consider*, that is, bethink your selves, First, What God is doing. Secondly, What you have been doing. Thirdly, What becomes you to do in such a day. The prophet points us to the two latter Duties of such a day in one verse, (*Lam.* 3.40.) *Let us search and try our wayes, and turn again to the Lord. To search our wayes*, is to consider what we have been doing; *to turn to the Lord*, is the great thing to be done, in a day of adversity.

Secondly, As this exercise of the soul consists in searching our own hearts; so in searching the heart of God (if I may so speak) that is, in an humble enquiry to the utmost, what God meaneth by any affliction, what hath moved him to afflict us; and we have as much cause to search Gods heart, as our own in this case. Thus in that National affliction (2 *Sam.* 21. 1.) when the famine continued three years, year after year, it is said, *David enquired of the Lord, why is it thus?* he search'd Gods heart by desiring an answer from the Lord, what sin it was which provoked him to that sad dispensation. And thus we should be enquiring of God by prayer what sin he striketh at, or what grace he specially calleth us to act by any affliction which he sendeth either upon our families or persons.

Thirdly, There is an exercising of our selves in searching the affliction it self; first, into the nature of it. Secondly, into the circumstances of it, how timed, and measured, by what hand, and in what way the Lord deals with us; this is a great exercise, and unless we are thus exercised under affliction, we get smart, and loss, and bitterness, but no good at all by it. So much for the first counsel given *Job* by *Elihu*, *It is meet to be said unto God, I have born chastisement.*

His second counsel as it lies here in the order of the Text, is about the reformation, or the amendment of what is amiss.

I will not offend any more.

לא אוסיף a radice חבל It is fit the afflicted should say unto God, *I will not offend.* The root of the word here used, signifieth sometimes the pains of travel in childe-bearing, (*Cant.* 8. 5.) *I raised thee up under the Apple-tree, there thy mother brought thee forth, there she brought thee forth that bare thee.* And again (*Psal.* 7. 14.) *Behold he travelleth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falshood:* It signifieth also in Scripture to corrupt, or to pollute, (*Neh.* 1.7.) *We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgements which thou commandest thy servant Moses.* To deal corruptly, or to do corruptly, what is it but to sin against or offend God? Every offence or sin, springs from the corruption of our own hearts, and is a corruption of our wayes and manners. Both these readings, *I will not offend*, or, *I will not corrupt*, meet in the same sence; for to corrupt our wayes is to offend, and to offend is to corrupt our wayes; to do any evil is to corrupt our selves, or others. So then, the meaning plainly is this, I will corrupt my way no more; the man in affliction must say to God in a deep sence of, and sorrow for his former sins, offences, and corruptions, *I will offend*, I *will corrupt no more.* Now, comparing the former counsel with this; Observe, First.

significat magna nocendi cupiditate ardere sicut mulieres ardent desiderio concipiendi fœtum: transfertur in secunda conjugatione, vel ad parturientium dolores, vel ad concupiscendi libidinem. Moller *in* Psal. 7.14.

Non tantum in Piel, sed & in Kall videtur usurpari pro corrumpere, Zech. 11.7.14. Job 34,31. *De Dieu in loc.*

Chastisement is for amendment.

The evil of affliction is brought upon us, that we may take heed of, and turn from the evil of sin, (that's intimated by the connexion) therefore to go on offending, while God is chastening, is to add rebellion to our sin. It was the brand of *Ahaz* (2 Chron. 28. 22.) *in the time of his distress, he trespassed yet more against the Lord*; whereas being in distress, he should have said to the Lord, *I will trespass no more.*

Note secondly.

When God chastens us, we should promise amendment.

We should tel God, we will him offend no more, we wil grieve him no more, we will provoke him no more, we will dishonour him no more; the least sin once committed is too much, therefore we should engage to sin no more.

But it may be question'd, can any man make such a promise, or take such an engagement upon himself, when under chastisement, that he will offend no more? Is that degree of perfection attainable in this life, to offend no more? How then is this *meet to be said*

ſaid unto God, I *will offend no more* ? Muſt we promiſe things that we cannot perform ? Is there any man chaſtened that offends not again ? ſaith not the Apoſtle *James, in many things we offend all* ? Is it then meet to ſay this unto God, I *will offend no more* ? Is it not ſinful to make a promiſe not to ſin ? I anſwer,

Firſt, by way of conceſſion. No man may promiſe, what ever his chaſtiſements are, that he never will ſin at all any more, no man can make any ſuch promiſe, neither is that the meaning here; but he that is under the chaſtening hand of God, may and muſt, promiſe that he will not commit ſuch, or ſuch a ſin any more ; eſpecially not ſuch a ſin as he moſt ſuſpects to have brought the chaſtiſement upon his back ; we may make promiſes againſt particular ſins, though we cannot promiſe we will never ſin.

Secondly, We may promiſe, when we are under the chaſtening hand of God, that we will offend no more, in ſuch a manner as we have offended formerly, ſo fooliſhly, ſo vainly, ſo negligently ; we may and muſt promiſe to be more watchful, that we ſin not the ſame ſin again either for matter or manner.

Thirdly, When chaſtened, we may ſay unto God abſolutely, we will offend no more, with reſpect to the purpoſe of our ſouls ; that is, we muſt lay aſide all purpoſes of committing any ſin ; yea we may, we muſt tell the Lord, 'tis the deſire and purpoſe of our ſouls, 'tis our ayme, and ſhall be our endeavour to offend no more. The ayme of every true believer is not to ſin, though (in this world) it be not the attainment of any (1 *John* 2. 1.) *My little children, theſe things write I unto you, that ye ſin not :* As if the Apoſtle had ſaid, I would fain wynde up your hearts to ſuch a pitch, that you may not ſin at all ; *But if any man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father* ; I know you cannot but ſin, yet let it be your care not to ſin, and your prayer to offend no more. And how ſhould we bleſs the Lord, if we could live without ſin, and be for ever rid of it ! we ſhould wiſh a thouſand times more to be quit of ſin, then affliction ; thus we muſt ſay unto God, we will offend no more.

Fourthly, though we cannot promiſe, or take up ſuch a reſolution abſolutely, nor in our own ſtrength, yet we may and ought in the ſtrength of Chriſt, or to the utmoſt of that ſtrength and grace, which he gives out, and beſtoweth upon us.

I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak further to this poin', from thoſe words

words of the 32d or next verſe, (which are of neer alliance both as to matter and form with theſe here) *If I have done iniquity, I will do no more.*

Only before I paſs from this rendering of the Text in hand, take two Notes more ; In that *Elihu* telleth the penitent perſon, he ought to ſay unto God, *I will not offend any more.*

Note, Firſt.

A truly humbled and repenting ſoul, is as careful to avoid the act of ſin for the time to come, as to be freed from the guilt of ſin paſt.

This holy care is a ſure argument of a good conſcience. A wicked wretch may be deſirous to have former offences pardoned, but he hath not any unfeigned purpoſe not to offend any more ; and uſually he hath no ſooner caſt up his ſin by a ſeeming penitent confeſſion, but he returns with the dog to his vomit by a freſh commiſſion of his ſin. Sorrow for ſin yeilds no comfort, if not accompanied with a care not to ſin. Chriſt was not ſo rigid to the woman taken in Adultery as her accuſers were, yet he ſaith to her, (*John* 8. 11.) *Go and ſin no more* ; as if he had ſaid, thy caſe will be ſad, though now thou haſt eſcaped or got rid of thy accuſers, if thou tradeſt on in this wicked way. And when *David* prayed for purging the ſin paſt, he alſo prayed for eſtabliſhing by the free Spirit of God, againſt ſuch-like temptations in time to come, (*Pſal.* 51.) as if he had ſaid, Lord, I do not ask pardon that I might take liberty to offend again, but I deſire thy confirming and preventing grace, that I may offend no more.

Secondly, From the extenſiveneſs of this engagement, to which *Elihu* directs the penitent perſon, *I will not offend any more*, neither in one kinde nor other.

Note.

He that is truly humbled for any one ſin, will to his utmoſt avoid every ſin.

He ſaith, I will not offend any more. He that loves God, cannot live in the doing of any one thing which God hates ; but as he expects good out of all the promiſes, ſo he hath reſpect to all the commandments ; whoſoever hath ſo, would not offend in any thing any more.

Further,

Further, as this latter clause is translated, I *will corrupt no more.*

Note.
First, *Sin is a corruption.*

We shall do well to look upon sin in all its notions, to make it loathsom to us; this is one notion of it, sin corrupts every thing and person it hath to do with.

First, Sin is the corruption of our nature, the whole mass of mankinde, and the whole of every man is leavened by it.

Secondly, Sin is the corruption of our conversation, and of our way, (*Gen. 6. 11, 12.*) *God looked upon the earth, and behold it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.* Moses warns the people of Israel against sin upon this ground, (*Deut. 4. 16.*) *Lest ye corrupt your selves, and make you a graven image,* read *Psal. 53. 1. Hos. 9. 9. Zeph. 3. 7. Zech. 3. 7.*

Thirdly, Sinning is the corrupting of the Commandments of God, a sinner as much as in him lyeth makes void the Law.

Fourthly, Sinning is a corrupting of the Covenant of God; yea some kinde of sinning is a corrupting the blood of the Covenant, or a counting the blood of the Covenant as an unholy thing (*Heb. 10. 29.*) though the blood of the Covenant be in it self infinitely above all corruption, yet sin doth what it can to corrupt it.

Lastly, Some render, *it is meet to be said unto God, I have born chastisement, I will not break;* which we may understand two ways. First, I *will not again break* the Commandment; so it falls in with our Translation, I *will not offend.* Secondly, I *will not break;* that is, those rods, or bonds of chastisement that thou hast laid upon me; as if he should say, Lord, thou hast bound me in these fetters of affliction, and I will abide thy pleasure under them, I will not strive, but submit, I will not break prison, but wait thy time for my deliverance.

Ideo ad Deum dici debet perfero, non disrumpam. Bez.

Hence Note.
We must bear, not break the bonds of our affliction.

Some (like stubborn children under the chastening hand of a Parent) would even break away from God; or like malefactors, when under the hand of Justice, they would break prison, knock off their irons, and get away. As the wicked do, and speak concerning the bands and cords of Gods Commandments, (*Psal. 2. 3.*) *Let*

Let us breake their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us; so some speake and doe about the bands and cords of divine chastisements, they will breake from them, or breake them, if possibly they can. Let such remember, 'tis best when they are in Gods bands, to let him untie them, and when they are in his prison, 'tis good to abide there, till he is pleased to discharge and let them out. The Apostles being in prison, the Magistrates sent the Sergeants, saying, *Let these men goe*, but *Paul* sayd unto them, *they have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romanes, and have cast us into prison, and now doe they thrust us out privily, nay verily, but let them come themselves and fetch us out.* A godly man when under restraint by the illegal or rigorous dealings of the Magistrate, will not accept his liberty, upon unworthy termes; surely then he will not make an escape out of the hand of God unwarrantably. He is ready to accept his liberty with much thankfullnesse, but he will not force it with violence. A godly man would free himselfe from sin, and get heaven by a kind of force (as Christ speakes in the Gospel) but he would not free himselfe from suffering by force, nor get his ease by violence. When God bindes him, he faith (according to this reading) I *will not breake.*

But you will say, who may be sayd to breake or get by force out of the chastning hand of God?

I answer; First, they doe it, by way of interpretation, who are impatient and unquiet in their afflictions. A child that strives and struggles under his fathers rod, breakes away from him as much as he can.

Secondly, They actually breake from under the hand of God, who by any sinfull way helpe themselves out of their afflictions. Such, when God hath bound them with the cords of affliction, goe to the Devill to loose & let them out. 'Tis sad when God imprisons a man, But O how sad is it to go to the Devill for a release; yet so doe all they who being under affliction, endeavour to free themselves by any sinful way; especially when they who are persecuted for the faith & truth of Christ, break their faith with Christ, and quit the truth before professed, that they may quit themselves from persecution. O take heed of such deliverances, rather dye under the afflicting hand of God, or the persecuting hand of man, then free your selves from either by putting your hand or suffering your mouth to sin. Better be utterly broken by affliction, then

so to breake the bands of affliction; better dye in affliction, then sin your selves out of affliction. Let God who hath layd the burthen upon you, take it off, or else lye under it still. Thus much for these two counsels given *Job* by *Elihu*; *It is meete to be sayd unto God, I have borne chastisement*, and, *it is meete to be sayd unto God, I will offend no more*; there is yet a third thing to be sayd unto God, which *Elihu* gives also in counsel, *that which I see not teach thou me*; But, before I proceed to that, I shall a while consider another translation of the verse already opened, very Consistent with the Original text, and much Insisted upon by some learned Interpreters, as being full of Gospel sense, and very spiritual matter. According to this second reading the words run thus:

Sed ad deum fortem, qui dicit condono, non destruam, dicendum est præterquam quod video tu doce me, si iniquitatem operatus sum non pergam. Merl.

Vers. 31. *But to the Almighty God who saith, I forgive, I will not destroy; It ought to be said, beside what I see teach thou me, if I have done Iniquity, I will not proceed to doe it.*

The difference of the translation is very evident and eminent; we read thus; *Surely it is meete to be sayd to God, I have borne chastisement, I will not offend any more.* This translation saith, *But to God who saith I forgive*, &c. *It ought to be sayd*, &c. Mr *Broughton*, is express for this translation, rendring the text in these words; *Now unto the omnipotent which saith, I pardon, I will not destroy, this shall be said, what I see not teach thou me*, &c.

As the words according to our translation containe an humble and a very gracious acknowledgement of the Chastening hand of God, and mans promise of reformation; so accordingto this they containe a most precious description of the most gracious disposition of God, speaking two things of himselfe to man.

First, As pardoning.

Secondly, As not destroying. From this double discovery of God, a double duty is inferr'd, incumbent upon man. For God having thus declared himselfe ready to forgive sin, and loth to destroy sinners, every sinner should be induced to say thus to God; *I see many of my sins, and I believe I have many sins more which I see not; therefore, first, I beg of thee, O God, that thou wouldest shew me what I see not, and, secondly, that thou wouldest keep me for ever from doing or committing againe that evill which thou shalt shew me or cause me to see.* Thus the 32d verse is an Inference

ference of a two-fold duty in man, upon that two-fold manifestation of the goodnesse of God, as a God that willingly pardoneth sin, and as a God that is unwilling to destroy sinners.

Or we may give the summe of these two verses (according unto this second translation) thus; We have first an Exhortation to repentance from the most mercifull nature of God, both as ready to forgive, and as loth to destroy his creatures. The former act importing the taking away of the guilt of sin; the latter the remittal and removall of the punishment.

1 *Condono, in quo est remissio culpæ.*
2 *Non destruam in quo est remissio pœnæ.*

Secondly, We have here a direction about repentance, or to the penitent, shewing, how an humbled soule should behave himselfe toward God; He ought to say thus; *What I see not teach thou me, and if I have done iniquity, I will doe no more.* Where we see the humbled soule in the exercise of a fourefold duty; First, He confesseth what sins he knoweth; Secondly, He confesseth or supposeth, that he hath many sins which he doth not know. Thirdly, He entreateth the Lord to shew him every sin, whether of heart or life, which he knoweth not of. Fourthly, He engageth that he will not continue in any sin which the Lord shall discover to him, or give him the knowledge of. You have thus the generall scope of these two verses according to this second reading.

I shall now a little open the words, and give Notes from them according to this translation.

But unto God who saith, I forgive.

It may here be justly questioned, how the Original can be render'd into such variety; one translation saith, *It is meete to be sayd to God, I have borne chastisemen*; this other saith, *To God who saith, I forgive, I will not destroy; It ought to be said*, &c. The first reading makes the words to be spoken by man; this second reading gives the words as spoken both by God and man, or they are a direction given by the Spirit of God to man, what to say to God, *Who saith, I forgive, I will not destroy?*

Verbum נשא *latissimè patet si quid aliud Hebraicum, inter alios tolerandi, parcendi, condonandi remittendi significatum habet etiam solitariè positum ut hic.*

I answer, for the clearing of that doubt, the difference of the readings ariseth from the copious signification of one Hebrew word, which is rendred many wayes in Scripture, especially two.

First, *To bear*, in which sense we translate, I *have born chastise-*

ſtiſement. The word *chaſtiſement*, as was ſhewed before, is not expreſly in the text, but ſupplyed, to make out the ſenſe, by our tranſlaters: I *have born*, what? thy hand, thy chaſtiſement.

Secondly, It ſignifies alſo *to pardon*, or *to forgive*; I ſhall referre you to one Scripture, in which that word is uſed in both theſe ſenſes (*Gen:* 4. 13.) *And Cain ſaid unto the Lord, my puniſhment is greater then* I *can bear*; that's the text, but if you read the margin of our larger Bibles, that ſaith, *My iniquity is greater then that it may be forgiven, or pardoned*; the text ſaith, *my puniſhment*; the margin ſaith, *my iniquity*; the ſame word ſignifieth both ſin the cauſe, and puniſhment the fruit. Againe, there the text ſaith, *My puniſhment is greater then* I *can bear*; and the margin ſaith, *my iniquity is greater then that it can be forgiven*: So that according to the text, the words are *Cains* complaint againſt the juſtice of God; that he dealt over-rigorouſly with him, *My puniſhment is greater then* I *can bear*. And according to the margin, they are a deſcription of his deſpair of the mercy of God, *my ſin is greater then that it may be forgiven*. And as we find the word uſed in that place, both for bearing, and for pardoning; So in ſeverall other places it is tranſlated by pardoning; take but one Inſtance in the Pſalms, where we find it tranſlated twice in the ſpace of a few verſes to forgive or pardon (*Pſal:* 32. 1.) *Bleſſed is the man whoſe iniquity is forgiven*. And againe, *v.* 5th, I *ſaid* I *will confeſſe my iniquity, and thou forgaveſt the iniquity of my ſin*; So that, though there be a different verſion and tranſlation of the word in this text of Scripture, yet it is ſuch as is conſonant to the uſe of the word in other Scriptures, and alſo to the truth of the whole Scripture.

Yea, we know that in our Engliſh tongue, to *bear with a man*, ſignifies to forgive him his preſent fault, or not to puniſh him and uſe extremity againſt him for it. And therefore according to the exigence of any place, the word may be tranſlated either way, and here it may be ſafely taken in both.

But to God who ſaith, I *forgive,* I *will not deſtroy, it ought* (*or it is meete*) *to be ſaid, what* I *ſee not teach thou me.*

Elihu according to the reading now before us, brings in God thus ſpeaking, yea even boaſting thus of himſelfe, I *forgive*, *or* I *pardon*.

Hence

Hence note.

First; It *is Gods owne profeſſion of his owne ſelfe, that he is a ſin-pardoning God.*

And God doth ſo much ſay or profeſſe this of himſelfe, that when he was entreated by *Moſes* to ſhew him his glory, this was the chiefe thing which he ſayd of himſelfe (*Exod:* 34. 6, 7.) *And the Lord paſſed before him, and proclaimed the Lord, the Lord God mercifull and gracious, long-ſuffering and abundant in goodneſſe and truth, keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin*. Here's my name (ſaith God) if you would know how I am called, or what I would call my ſelfe, this is it, *I am a God forgiving iniquity*, &c.

And as God pardoneth ſin, ſo there is none in heaven or in earth that pardoneth like him, that hath ſuch a name for pardon as God hath (*Mic:* 7. 18.) *Who is a God like unto thee, pardoning iniquity*, &c. The gods of the Earth, that is, Kings and Princes give pardons, and to doe ſo is the ſweeteſt and choyceſt flower in the Crowne of Princes, and they uſually ſhew their Greatneſs by this act of grace when they come firſt to their Crowne and exerciſe of their ſoveraigne power. The Princes or gods of the Earth can pardon, but ('tis no diſparagement to put that queſtion) *Can they pardon like God?* no; their pardon is no pardon in compariſon of Gods pardon; yea their pardoning is a kinde of condemning compared with the pardoning grace of God. The pardons which Kings give are but the ſhadow of his pardon, who is King of kings (*Iſa:* 43. 25.) I, *even I am he that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſion*. As if he had ſaid, I am he, and there is none elſe; this glory is proper to me, and none can partake with me in it, nor will I give this glory to another. All ſins are committed againſt God, and (in a ſenſe) againſt him only, therefore only to be pardoned by him. Who can remit the debt but the Creditor? (*Pſal:* 51. 1.) *Againſt thee, thee only have* I *ſinned*. What debt ſoever we run into by any ſin committed againſt man, God only is the Creditor. All that men can doe, is but to forgive the treſpaſſe againſt themſelves; ſo farre as man is wronged, he may, yea he ought to forgive, as Chriſt teacheth us to pray (*Math:* 6. 12.) *Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*. All that we can forgive is only the treſpaſs done to our ſelves, and ſo forbeare perſonal

ſonal and private revenge. We cannot forgive the offence againſt God. For when Chriſt ſaith (*John* 21. 20.) *Whoſoever ſins ye remit, they are remitted* ; that remiſſion is but the declaring of a pardon, it is not the beſtowing of a pardon, or it is only a miniſterial forgiveneſſe, not an authoritative forgiveneſſe ; ſo to forgive is Gods Royalty ; He ſaith, I *forgive*.

Secondly, *To God who ſaith*, I *forgive*, &c. Forgive! what? forgive! whom? Here's neither what nor whom, neither things nor perſons named, God barely ſaith, I *forgive*.

Hence obſerve.

The pardoning mercy of God is boundleſſe and unlimited.

Here's no ſin named, therefore all are included, no ſinner ſpecified, therefore all are intended. I *forgive*, I *pardon* ; the pardoning mercy of God knows no limits ; it is not limitted ; Firſt, to any ſort of ſins or ſinners ; Secondly, it is not limited to any degree of ſins or ſinners ; let ſins or ſinners be of what ſort they will, let ſins or ſinners be of what degree they will, they are within the compaſſe of Gods pardoning mercy. And as this text intimates, that the pardoning mercy of God is boundleſſe, becauſe it expreſſeth no bounds ; So other Scriptures tell us expreſly that it is boundleſſe, extending it ſelfe to all ſorts and degrees of ſins and ſinners (*Math:* 12. 31.) *Every ſin and blaſphemy ſhall be forgiven*. That a ſin is great, that it is extremely aggravated, is no barre at all to the pardoning mercy of God ; he can as eaſily pardon great ſins as little ſins ; even ſins that are as Crimſon and ſcarler, as well as thoſe of the lighteſt tincture. The die or colour of ſome cloaths or ſtuffs, is ſo fading, that (as we ſay) the next wind will blow it off, or cauſe it to dye away, but ſcarlet and crimſon in graine never change their colour ; yet the pardoning grace of God cauſeth crimſon and ſcarlet ſins to change colour, and makes them as white as the naturall wool or ſnow, that is, takes them quite and cleane away. Yea the greatneſſe of ſin is ſo far from being a ſtop to pardon, that it is uſed as an argument to move God to pardon. *David* prayeth (*Pſal:* 25. 11.) *For thy names ſake O Lord, pardon mine iniquity* ; why? doth he ſay? becauſe it is little, or only a ſmall ſin, a ſin committed raſhly, unadviſedly, or but once ; no ; he uſeth none of theſe excuſatory pleas for pardon, but ſaith, *pardon my ſin for it is great*. *Moſes* was not afraid to ſpeake

ſpeake for pardon upon this ground alſo (*Exod:* 32. 31.) *Lord* (ſaith he) *this people have committed a great ſin, and have made them gods of gold, yet now if thou wilt forgive their ſin*, &c. There's a great deale of divine Rhetorique in that ſpeech ; *Moſes* was not doubtfull, whether God would forgive them their ſin, becauſe it was great, but he urged the Lord to forgive their ſin becauſe it was great. *Where ſin aboundeth, Grace doth much more abound* (*Rom:* 5. 20.) and therefore God is ſaid *to pardon abundantly*, or to multiply to pardon (*Iſa:* 55. 7.) and whom doth he promiſe to pardon there? even *the man of iniquity*, ſo that Scripture hath it ; *Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man* (*or the man of iniquity*) *his thoughts*, &c. If you who have ſinned abundantly, repent, I will pardon abundantly. The heart of God in pardoning ſin is infinitely larger then the heart of man can be in committing ſin : and as the leaſt ſin needs pardon, ſo the greateſt may have it ; nothing hinders the pardon of ſin, but the ſinners not coming for it, or his not asking it. The ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt cannot be forgiven ; but the reaſon is, becauſe ſuch as commit that ſin utterly reject the grace of God, and tread the blood of the Covenant under their feet, as an unholy thing.

Thirdly, The text ſpeakes in the preſent tenſe ; God ſaith not, I *will pardon*, or, poſſibly, I *may pardon*, but ſheweth what he both actually doth, and what he alwayes doth, *To God who ſaith I pardon*.

Hence note.

God pardoneth preſently, he pardoneth continually.

I *pardon*, is a preſent, it is a continued act. To pardon is Gods work to day, and Gods work to morrow. As every ſoule may ſay of himſelfe, *Lord* I *ſin* ; not only I have ſinned, or I ſhall ſin hereafter, but *I ſin* : ſo ſaith God, *I pardon* ; as men ſtand alwayes in need of pardon, ſo God ſtands alwayes prepared to pardon. *He is* (Pſal: 86. 5.) *plenteous in mercy, ready to forgive* ; The heart of God is never out of frame for that worke, never indiſpoſed to it, *David* found him ſo (*Pſal:* 32. 5.) *I ſaid I will confeſſe mine iniquity* ; he did not ſay, *I have confeſſed mine iniquity* ; he was not come to a formall Confeſſion ; onely he had it upon his heart to humble himſelfe before God, and confeſſe his ſin ; yet it follows ; *and thou forgaveſt the iniquity of my ſin*.

While

While there was but a holy reſolve upon his heart to confeſſe his ſin, the pardon of it was given him. The holy hiſtory of his ſin and of Gods mercy aſſureth us, that the word was no ſooner out of his mouth (2 *Sam:* 12.13.) *I have ſinned*, but inſtantly *Nathan* ſaid, *The Lord hath put away thy ſin.* Though God doth not pardon of courſe, yet he is in a continuall courſe of pardon; therefore *Moſes* prayed (*Numb:* 14.19.) That God would *pardon the people according to the greatneſs of his mercy, and as he had forgiven them from Egypt untill then.* As it he had ſayd, *Lord, thou haſt been pardoning all along from the very firſt ſtep we took out of Egypt to this day, thou haſt exerciſed abundance of patience, long-ſuffering and mercy in pardoning this people, now Lord pardon us, as thou haſt done from Egypt to this day; doe not ſtop thy acts of Grace.* The very firſt act of pardon ſtands for ever, he that is once pardon'd, is alwayes pardon'd: yet there are dayly renewings of pardon, and freſh acts of it every day.

Fourthly, The word render'd *to pardon*, ſignifies *to take away*; as to beare a burden upon our ſelves (according to the former tranſlation) ſo to beare, or lift it off from another.

Hence Note.

Pardon is the taking away, or the bearing of ſin off from us.

An unpardoned ſoul hath a burden of ſin upon him ready to break his back, yea enough to break his heart, were he ſenſible of it; the Lord by pardon takes this burden off from him. *David* ſpeaks of his ſins under this notion of a burden, (*Pſal.* 38.4.) *My ſins are gone over my head, they are a burden too heavie for me to bear.* Yea ſin is a burden too heavie for the ſtrongeſt Angel in heaven to bear. But pardon eaſeth the ſoul of that burden, or 'tis the unburdening of the ſoul: Hence alſo pardon is called *the removing of ſin*, (Pſal. 103.12.) *Thou removeſt our ſins from us, as far as the Eaſt is from the Weſt.* Pardon removes ſin even to the utmoſt diſtance, ſuch is that of the Eaſt from the Weſt. Pardon is called in another Scripture, the caſting of ſin behinde Gods back (*Iſa.* 38.17.) *Thou haſt caſt all my ſins behinde thy back.* Ye when God by pardon takes ſin from off our backs, he doth not only caſt it behinde his owne back, but he layeth it upon the back of his Son. Sin muſt lye ſomwhere till it is ſatisfied for; therefore pardon takes ſin off from us, and layeth it upon Chriſt, (*Iſa.* 53.6.)

6.) He hath laid on him the iniquities of us all. While ſin is unpardoned, we bear it; and that it might be pardoned, Chriſt hath born it, (1 *Pet.* 2.24) *He bare our ſins in his body on the tree.* Pardoned ſin is taken off from the ſinner, and laid upon Chriſt; and he can do well enough with it, he can bear it, and diſcharge it fully, none elſe can: Indeed heaps of ſin lye on the ſouls of ſome ſinners, and they feel them no more then a fly: what's the reaſon of it? Becauſe they are dead in their ſins, and nothing is a burden to a dead man, throw a thouſand Milſtones upon him, he feels none of them: but a ſoul that is awakened, that hath but ſo much life put into it, as to feel a conviction of ſin, O how is that ſoul preſt and burden'd with the weight of ſin! Yet till pardon take ſin off from the ſoul, there it muſt lye, there it muſt abide; therefore Chriſt ſaith, (*John* 9.41.) *Becauſe ye ſay ye ſee, your ſin remains*; What's that? You are unpardoned, your ſin is upon you ſtill; you think your ſelves very wiſe and underſtanding, you think you can do well enough without me, therefore your ſin remaineth; that is, it ſtands in full power and force againſt you.

Fifthly, Here are no conditions; God ſaith not, I pardon upon ſuch and ſuch terms, but *I pardon.*

Hence Note.

God pardons freely, he doth not clog pardon with hard terms.

'Tis the glory of God that he pardons freely. The pardon of ſin may be conſidered, Firſt, In the Decree of God from everlaſting. Secondly, In the Execution of his Decree; which is, when any are effectually called and converted. Thirdly, As to the manifeſtation and Declaration of it to the perſon pardoned. A poor ſinner may be unpardoned in his own ſence, or in the Court of Conſcience, when he is pardoned in the Court of Heaven. Now as pardon is free in the Decree of it, ſo in the Execution of it, as alſo in the Declaration of it to the ſoul; for though ſomthing, yea much muſt be done in the ſoul before pardon is declared, yet nothing is deſerved, all is of free grace. God doth not manifeſt pardon till man repents and believes; yet he doth not pardon him becauſe he repents and believes.

It may be objected, Surely there is ſomthing in us which moves God to pardon, for ſaith not Chriſt of *Mary* (Luke 7.47.) *Many ſins are forgiven her, for ſhe loved much.* Hence Papiſts argue,

that, pardon of ſin is from ſomthing in us, ſhe repented much, believed much, loved much, therefore much was forgiven her?

I anſwer, That Scripture declares her great love to be the effect of great pardoning mercy, not the cauſe of it. Chriſt ſaith to *Peter*, much is forgiven her; this woman was a noted ſinner, and it appears plainly, that much hath been forgiven her, for ſhe loved much. That her many ſins are forgiven her, this is the teſtimony, *ſhe loved much*: The love of God to us, not our love to him, is the reaſon and original of pardon, (*Iſa.* 43. 25.) *I am he that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions for my own ſake.* God pardoneth ſin for his own ſake, and for Chriſts ſake, not for ours. In one Scripture God ſaith (*Exod.* 34. 6, 7.) *I will by no means clear the guilty.* In another (*John* 6. 37.) Chriſt ſaith, *He that comes to me, I will in no wiſe caſt out.* Till the ſinner cometh to Chriſt, his ſins are upon his own account; that is, he ſtands guilty, and God ſaith, *I will by no means clear the guilty*; no man ſhall ever be clear'd of the puniſhment due to his ſin, while the guilt of his ſin is untaken off by the blood of Jeſus Chriſt: but beſides reſpect to the blood of Chriſt (which is the ranſome paid for us) God reſpects nothing out of himſelf as the reaſon why he pardoneth us. I *forgive.*

I *will not deſtroy.*

Our Tranſlation reads it, I *will not offend.* The word ſignifies firſt to offend or ſin; it ſignifies alſo to deſtroy; and becauſe deſtruction is a fruit or effect of ſin, one word may well ſerve for both; ſo we render it (*Micah* 2.10.) *This is not your reſt, becauſe it is polluted, it ſhall deſtroy you, even with a ſore deſtruction.* Canaan was the reſting place of God himſelf, (*Pſal.* 132.14.) and it was the reſting place of the Jewes after their travel through the wilderneſs, (*Jer.* 31. 2.) but when once they had polluted the land by ſin, the land gave them no reſt, but deſtroyed them; that is, they were deſtroyed out of the land. Here God declaring himſelf gracious in pardoning penitent ſinners, promiſeth reſt to them, and freedome from deſtruction. I *forgive*, I *will not deſtroy.*

Hence obſerve firſt;

God is able to deſtroy.

Thus God reported himſelf by *Moſes*, (Deut. 32.39.) *See now, that I, even I am he, and there is no God with me; I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal; neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.* God doth not ſay *I cannot*, but *I will not deſtroy*; (James 4. 12.) *There is one Law-giver who is able to ſave and to deſtroy:* There is but one ſupream Law-giver, and that's God: and this one Law-giver is able to ſave and to deſtroy. There are many Law-givers that are neither able to ſave nor to deſtroy; or if they be able to deſtroy, they are not able to ſave. Men in authority, or worldly Powers, have not power alwayes to act their authority, but there is one Law-giver that's able to ſave and to deſtroy; he can ſave thoſe that obey his Lawes, and deſtroy all thoſe that tranſgreſs them; he is too ſtrong for the ſtrongeſt ſinner, there is no making peace with him by oppoſing or overcoming his ſtrength, *but by taking hold of his ſtrength*, that is, by ſubmitting to it, (*Iſa.* 27. 5.)

Secondly Note.

To forgive ſin, or to ſhew mercy to ſinners, is an act to which God declares himſelf more enclin'd, or better pleaſed with, then to deſtroy ſinners.

Every one that ſinneth deſerves to be deſtroyed; yet ſaith the Lord, *I pardon, I will not deſtroy*; I could deſtroy, and any one ſin committed by any man would juſtifie me againſt all the world in his deſtruction: *Every mouth muſt be ſtopped, and all the world become guilty before God* upon that account, (*Rom.* 3. 19.) yet God doth not deſtroy. And that he hath no content in deſtroying, he bindes it with an Oath (*Ezek.* 33. 11.) *As I live ſaith the Lord, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked*, &c. as if he had ſaid, I am not bent upon your deſtruction, I had rather be taken off, and ſave you, I *pardon*, I *will not deſtroy.*

If any ſhall ſay, Hath God no pleaſure in deſtruction? Hath he not a will to deſtroy as well as to ſave?

I anſwer, God hath pleaſure in deſtroying, but it is in the deſtruction of thoſe who obſtinately reſiſt his Will, who refuſe both his counſel and his Covenant; to ſuch indeed he ſaith (*Prov.* 1. 26.) *I will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear* (that is, the thing you feared) *cometh, as deſolation*, &c. That, the men in whoſe calamity God laugheth are ſuch, is evident by the character given of them at the 25th verſe, *Ye have ſet at nought all my counſel, and would none of my reproof.* As if God had ſaid, you have

have laughed at my counsel, therefore I will laugh at your calamity. The Lord will declare himself delighted in their destruction who have despised instruction; and he will glorifie himself in the actings of his Justice upon them, who have slighted and put by the tenders and entreaties of his mercy. Yet still God declareth himself more pleased in acting and putting forth his saving power, then his destroying power. The Prophet (*Hos.* 11. 8, 9.) most pathetically represents, as it were, a debate in the breast of God himself between his Justice and his Mercy; *How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together*; (v. 9.) *I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim.* We see after the debate, the Lord determines for sparing, not for destroying. So then, though he can, and will not only destroy, but laugh at the destruction of obstinate sinners, yet he loves to spare rather then to destroy.

Thirdly, From the connexion of these two, pardoning and sparing mercy, God saith first, I *pardon*, and then secondly, I *will not destroy*; who are they whom God will not destroy? they are are such as he pardons.

Hence Note.

Pardoned persons shall never be destroyed.

As soon as *Nathan* had said to *David*, *the Lord hath put away thy sin*, the very next word is this, *thou shalt not dye*, (2 Sam. 12. 13.) if *Davids* sin had not been pardoned, *David* must have dyed for it. 'Tis a Logical Maxime, *When the Cause is taken away, the Effect is taken away*; Sin is the cause of destruction, therefore when God takes away sin, which is the cause, destruction the effect must needs be taken away too; pardon destroyeth sin, therefore how can they that are pardoned be destroyed? Pardon swallows up sin. As the Apostle speaks of life, (2 *Cor.* 5. 4.) *That mortality might be swallowed up of life*; Here, mortality swallows up our lives by degrees, but hereafter mortality shall be swallowed up at once of life; Now, as life shall then swallow up mortality, so pardon at present swalloweth up sin; for as in our glorified state there shall never any thing of mortality appear, so in a pardon'd estate, nothing of sin shall appear as to hurt us. Sin pardoned

Sublata causa tollitur effectus.

pardoned cannot be found, (*Jer.* 50. 20.) *In those dayes, and in that time saith the Lord, the iniquity of Jacob shall be sought for, and there shall be none, and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found*; why not? The Lord answers, *for I will pardon them whom I reserve*: And if their sins shall not be found, surely they shall not be found guilty, and therefore not destroyed: God may chasten them whom he hath pardoned, but he will not destroy those whom he hath pardon'd; pardoned persons may smart, and smart greatly for sin, but they shall not dye eternally for it, they shall not be destroyed for it. *David* was pardoned, yet God told him, *the sword shall never depart from thy house*; and the Lord told him particularly of a sore destruction upon a part of his house presently; *because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of God to blaspheme*, (thou being a Professor, hast opened the mouths of the wicked against profession) therefore (though thou shalt not dye, yet) *the childe also that is born unto thee shall surely dye.*

There are two things which the pardon of sin takes away. First, the power or reigne of sin; where-ever sin is pardoned, the strength of it is subdued. God doth not pardon sin as Princes do; they may pardon an evil doer, and yet he still remain as evil and as ready to do evil as ever; they may pardon a thief, and yet he continue to be a thief still; but if God pardons a drunkard, an adulterer, or a thief, he doth not remain a drunkard, or an adulterer, or a thief still; God takes away the power of that sin which he pardoneth. Secondly, The pardon of sin takes away the punishment of sin; it may leave some chastisement, but it wholly takes away the punishment. The Popish doctrine saith, the fault is taken away by pardon, but there is a commutation of the punishment, eternal punishment is changed into temporal, either in this life, or that to come; hence their doctrines of Purgatory, and of Prayer for the dead, *&c.* all which stuffe comes in upon this account. They cast all men into three sorts, some are Apostles and Martyrs, men very eminently godly, and they go immediately to heaven: there are another sort, and these are Apostates from, or persecuters of the faith, notorious sinners, these go immediately to hell: there are a third or middle sort of ordinary sinners, and they go immediately after death, neither to heaven nor hell, but to Purgatory, where they must bear the punishment

ment of their sins till they can be prayed out: Christ hath only got so much favour for them (say they) to change their eternal punishment into a temporal. The grace of the Gospel knows nothing of this Doctrine; that tells us when sin is pardoned, all is pardoned, both guilt and punishment, both temporal and eternal, nothing remains but only chastisement; how sorely soever a believer suffers in this life, yet strictly taken, it is but a chastisement, and there remaineth nothing for him to suffer in the life which is to come. And if so, then

Pardon of sin is a precious mercy. 'Tis so, First, Because it proceeds from the precious mercies of God. Secondly, Because it comes thorow the precious blood of Christ, (*Col.* 1. 14.) Thirdly, Because it opens a door to all precious mercies; as sin unpardoned with-holds all good things from us (*Jer.* 5. 25.) so sin pardoned opens the door for all mercy to flow in upon us. Christ said to the sick man (*Matth.* 9. 2.) *Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.* Fourthly, It is a precious mercy, because it stops and keeps off all evils and judgements strictly so called, I *forgive*, I *will not destroy*. Our comforts cannot stand before the guilt of sin, and our troubles cannot stand long before the pardon of sin; (*Isa.* 33. 24.) The highest wrath of God appears in this, when he will not pardon; and it argues the greatest displeasure of man against man, when he prayeth that he may not be pardoned. That was a most dreadful prayer of the Prophet, (*Isa.* 2. 9.) *The mean man is bowed down, and the mighty man humbles himself, therefore forgive them not*; here was a prayer that they might not be forgiven; and the ground why he prayed so, seems to be as strange, as the matter of it was dreadful. Is it a sin to be excepted from pardon, to see a mean man bow down, and a mighty man humble himself? The meaning is, they bowed themselves not to God, but to idols; all bowing and humbling our selves either to worship an idol, or in idol worship, is rebelling against God. We have a like prayer (*Jer.* 18. 23.) the Prophet having spoken of the plots and devisings of the people against him, turns himself thus to God, *Thou knowest all their counsel to slay me, forgive not their iniquity, neither blot their sin from thy sight*. Nothing can be wisht worse to any man then this, that his sin may never be pardoned. And here it may be questioned, how the Prophet could make such a prayer, which seems to have the height of all uncha-

uncharitableness in it. I answer, first, The Prophet was led by an extraordinary Spirit to do this. Secondly, We are not to conceive that the Prophet prayed for their eternal condemnation, but that God would call them to a reckoning, and make them feel the evil of their own doings. There is a sin unto death, for the pardon of which we are not to pray, (1 *John* 5. 16.) yet there is no sin about which we are to pray that it may never be pardoned. The worst prayer that can be made against any man, is, that he may not be pardoned; and there is nothing better to be prayed for then pardon. It shewed the height of Christs love, when hanging on the Cross, he prayed thus for his enemies, (*Luke* 23. 34.) *Father, forgive them, they know not what they do*; And the *Protomartyr Stephen* breathed out a like spirit of charity, while he was breathing out his life (in a shower of stones powred upon him from more stony hearts, *Acts* 7. 60.) with this prayer, *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.*

Thus, I have finished this 31th verse, both according to our own Translation, and that other insisted upon by many of the learned; only from the connexion of this verse with the next, according to the latter reading, (*To God who saith I pardon, I will not destroy; it should be said, that which I see not teach thou me, if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.*)

Observe.

The very consideration that God is ready to pardon sin, should make us resolved against the committing of sin.

The sin-pardoning mercy of God, is one of the highest and most spiritual arguments by which the soul is kept from sin. *There is forgiveness with thee* (saith *David*, Psal. 130. 4.) *that thou mayst be feared*; that is, because thou art so merciful as to forgive sinners, therefore they ought to fear thee, in doing what thy will is, and in avoiding whatsoever is contrary to thy will. 'Tis prophesied, that frame of spirit shall dwell upon the people of God in the latter dayes, (*Hos.* 3. 5.) *They shall fear the Lord and his goodness*; that is, they shall fear to offend the Lord because he is so good, and ready to pardon. It was said by a Heathen (and it may shame many who profess themselves Christians, that a hea then said so) *if I did know that men should never know the evil which I do, and that the gods* (so he speaks in their language) *would par-*

Si scirem homines ignoraturos & Deos ignoscituros, tamen non facerem. Sen.

don

don and forgive the evil which I do, yet I would not do it. Surely, the spirit of a true believer must needs rise thus high, and higher, upon the clear grounds of Gospel grace, and discoveries of the free love of God. Cannot a true believer say, though I know that God will pardon my sin, though he hath declared that my sin is pardoned, and though I could be assured that men should never know of this sin, if I commit it, yet I will not do it. *To God who saith I pardon, it should be said, I will sin no more.*

I shall now proceed to the 32d verse, which stands fair to either reading.

Vers. 32. *That which I see not, teach thou me; if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.*

Some carry the general sence of these words, as if spoken by God himself to *Job*, and spoken by an irony, or in scorn, as if he had thus bespoken him; *If I have afflicted thee beyond thy desert, or have overthrown thy judgement* (that *Job* had (more then once) complained of,) *if I have not kept to the true rules of reason and righteousness in chastening thee; if in my dealings with thee I have done amiss, or have not done thee right? Shew me wherein* (O Job) *and I will afflict thee so no more.* I shall not stay upon this, but take the words according to our Translation, as the whole verse intends a further description of a person deeply humbled under, and sensible of the hand, the chastening, the afflicting hand of God; who having said (with respect to all known sins) in the former verse, *I will offend no more*, saith here in this verse concerning all unknown sins, *That which I see not, teach thou me; and if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.*

Si quid me fugit in te affligendo, vel si quid errarem tu me doceas. Si te vexando perperam egi vel injustè me habui, non ultra, id fecero, σαρκασμος, Merc.

That which I see not.

There is a two-fold sight; First, Corporal, the sight of the bodily eye. Secondly, Intellectual, the sight of the eye of the minde, or of the understanding; when *Elihu* represents the penitent afflicted person speaking thus, *What I see not*, &c. he intends not a corporal sight but an intellectual. Seeing is here (as often elsewhere in Scripture) put for knowing: *the understanding is the eye of the soul.* How blinde and dark are those men, who have no understanding in the things of God! (*Eph.* 4. 18.) When Christ had

had sayd, *For judgement am I come into the world, that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blinde;* some of the Pharisees said unto him (*John* 9. 41.) *are we blinde also?* (have we no eyes?) *Jesus said unto them, If ye were blinde, ye should have no sin, but now ye say we see, therefore your sin remaineth;* that is, your sin remaineth upon you in the power and guilt of it. In that sense also Christ useth the word (*Math:* 13. 14.) *Hearing ye shall hear, and not understand, and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive;* ye shall have only such a knowledge of God, and of the things of God, of his word, & of his works, as will be of no other use to you, then to leave you without excuse. *Seeing ye shall see but not perceive;* ye shall have a fruitless and an unprofitable sight.

That which I see not (or have no understanding of) *teach thou me*, is the prayer of the humble soule. But what were those things, which he feared or supposed he did not see? Those unseene things might be of three sorts.

First, Those sins which he did not see; and those in a double notion, either corruptions dwelling in him, or evills acted by him. What corruptions, or what transgressions I see not, acquaint me with, anoynt mine eyes that I may see them.

Secondly, Those favours and mercies which he did not see (we have many mercies which are not knowne to us, or of which we take little, yea no notice at all) those good turns, which I have received and have not been thankfull, or have not improved and made sutable returns for them, shew thou me.

Thirdly, Among the things not seene we may number the purposes, aimes, and ends of God, in laying those chastisements upon him. As if he had sayd, *If I have not yet apprehended what thou drivest at in my affliction, shew it me, I beg and heartily desire a discovery of it. And if I have acted unduely with respect to thy aimes in chastising me, I will doe so no more.* The acts of God are plaine, but his aymes lie close and are not perceived, but by an enlightned, yea and a very attentive eye. *That which I see not*, &c.

Hence observe; First.

The choycest servants of God may be much in the darke about and short in the knowledge of many things which it much concerns them to know.

 Though

Though every believer hath an eye, and an eye open to see the things of God, the things which concern his peace, yet the clearest sighted among believers know but in part (1 *Cor.* 13. 9.) We all know, but we do not know all. Those words of the Apostle may have a twofold understanding. First, we know, but a little of any thing, that which we know we have but a part of it in our knowledge; in this life we know nothing throughly, nothing to the bottome, no not common principles. *David* saith (*Psal.* 119. 96.) *I have seen an end of all perfection, but thy commandement is exceeding broad*; There is such a perfection in thy commandement, that I cannot see, nor can any man come to the out-side of it in this world. And as the holiness of God in the Law is exceeding broad, so there is a hight, a depth, a length, and a breadth in the love of God revealed in the Gospel, which exceedeth all our knowledge. (*Eph.* 3. 19.) *That ye may know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge*, &c. We know but a part of that love of God, the fruits and effects whereof are all our portion. We are not able to comprehend, though we labour to comprehend the breadth and length and depth and height of it. Our measure of loving God is to love him out of measure; but 'tis a very small measure of the love of God to us which we can know. Thus we know but little of that we know. Secondly, *We know in part*, that is, there are many things which we know not at all, we have no knowledge of some things, which may be fully knowne. Though we know many of our sins and corruptions, yet we have sins and corruptions which we know not of (*Psal.* 19. 12.) *Who can understand his errors?* Who can understand the errors of his understanding? who can understand the errors of his will? who can understand the errors of his affections? who can understand the errors of his actions? who can understand them all? yet they are all understandable. There are many errors in all these, which we know not to be errors, therefore we have need every one of us to pray as *David* there did, *Cleanse thou me from my secret faults*. From secret faults in my understanding, from secret faults in my will and affections, in my practice and conversation. The secret faults which he asked pardon for were not those faults which he had committed in secret, or which other men know not of; but those faults which were secrets to himselfe, or which himselfe knew not of. Further, we know not our faults; First, either in reference to

to the doing of evill, or sins of commission; nor Secondly, in reference to the not doing of good or sins of omission; nor Thirdly, doe we know our faults in reference to the manner of doing that which is good. Though we doe not quite omit a duty, yet we faile many times in the doing of it. *We doe little of the good which we ought, and little of the good which we doe is done as it ought.* We have secret sins not only of commission in doing that which is evill, and of omission in not doing that which is good, but also in doing good. There are many flaws and errors in our doing of that which is good, which, though we perceive not, yet the pure eyes of God perceive. So then, as we see not all our errors in omitting duties, so we see not all our errors in performing duties; to see them requireth a spirituall sight indeed. Many can see when they omit a duty altogether, and charge themselves with a fault for it, but our faults in performance of duty, in prayer, in hearing none take notice of them, but they who have a spiritual eye, nor do they alwayes take notice of all of them, nor fully of any of them at any time. We are much in the dark about these errors which accompany our holy duties. The iniquities of our holy things are many, and they lie very close. We may quickly and easily fall into them, but we cannot easily discerne them.

For, First, though we performe an act of worship, of Church-worship, of instituted worship, right for the substance, yet we may miss and erre in severall circumstances, and not come up exactly to the outward performance of it. Secondly, much more may we run into errors and faults in the performance of duty, as to the internall part of it, or that frame of heart with which a duty is to be performed. We seldome, I may safely say, we never come up to that zeale, to that self-abasement, to that faith, to that love and delight which should be in us when we approach to and appeare before God in the duties of his holy worship, whether publick or private. The best of Saints come farre short of knowing all the evill and faylings of their evill and deceitfull hearts, while they are engaged about that which is good, how much more are they short in the knowledge of God; and therefore what reason have we to say, as *Elihu* here directs the penitent soule to say; *That which I know not teach thou me.*

Secondly, Note.

It is the duty of the most knowing servants of God to confesse their ignorance.

When *Elihu* would have *Job* say, *That which* I *see not teach thou me*, he would have him confesse, that there was some goed or evill which he did not see. He that desireth God to teach him, what he doth not see, doth therein acknowledge that he doth not see all that he ought. Our understandings are imperfect as well as our wills and affections; and our sins or imperfections where-soever they are must be confessed. The deficiency of our knowledge, or the imperfection of our understanding must be confessed as well as the imperfection of our will to doe good, and of our doing good. *David* layeth load upon himselfe in confessing the faultinesse of his understanding, or inability to judge aright of what he saw before him (*Psal:* 73. 22.) *So ignorant was* I *and foolish, even as a beast before thee.* And the speciall poynt wherein he confessed his ignorance, was about the outward dispensations of God, in suffering wicked men to flourish. He had ignorant apprehensiõs, and was quite out in that matter; and therefore befools himselfe and calls himselfe a beast, so far was he from seeing the mind and designe of God as became a Saint. Such an acknowledgement *Agur* made (*Pro:* 30. 2.) *I am more brutish then any man,* I *have not the understanding of a man, I neither learned wisdome, nor have the knowledge of the holy.* This worthy man confessed his ignorance; and as the more we know, the more we see our ignorance, so the more we know, the more we confesse our ignorance. They that have but little knowledge, are especially defective in this poynt of knowledge to see their ignorance; and are therefore but little troubled with their ignorance. Many think they know enough; some, possibly, think they know all. They who have least knowledge, are least conscious of their own ignorance. And as there are many sins of ignorance, so ignorance it selfe is a sin, and therefore to be confessed and bewailed before God.

Thirdly, When *Elihu* brings in the penitent person confessing his ignorance, and begging instruction,

It teacheth us,

Sins of ignorance need pardon.

As our ignorance needs pardon, so doe our sins of ignorance. The law of *Moses* teacheth this (*Levit:* 4. 2.) *If a soule shall sin through ignorance*, &c. *he shall bring his sacrifice.* He must make an attonement for his sin of ignorance. And we have further directions about offerings for sins of ignorance, when they are discovered and made knowne to the sinner himselfe. (*Lev:* 5. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.) *Then* (saith the Law) *he shall be guilty*, that is, if when he knoweth his sin, he doe not performe what the Law requireth in such cases, then he is not only ceremonially but morally guilty, as a neglecter if not as a despiter of the ordinance and appoynt-ment of God for his cleansing. *That which I see not*

teach thou me.

The words are a prayer for divine teaching. The teaching of God is two-fold; First, Immediate by his Spirit (*John* 14. 26.) *The Spirit which is the comforter shall come and teach you all things.* And againe (1 *John* 2. 27.) *The anoynting* (that is, the Spirit) *which ye have received of him, abideth in you: and ye need not that any man teach you*; that is, ye need not rest in, or pin your faith upon the teachings of man; as you must not despise, so ye need not depend upon the instruction of man. Secondly, There is a mediate teaching, God teacheth by meanes, instruments, and ordinances. First, by the ministery of his word; Secondly, by the works of his hands. He teacheth, First, by his works of creation; Secondly, by his works of providence, they are our masters, tutors and instructers. Now when this penitent person prayeth, *Teach thou me*; we may understand him of both these teachings. First, of immediate teaching by the Spirit, who is the anoynting. Secondly, of teaching by meanes, by the preaching of the word of God, and by his providences; in what way soever God is pleased to teach us, our hearts should stand open to receive instruction. And what way soever we receive instruction, it is God that teacheth us. Though men be the instruments, yet the effect is of him.

Hence Note, First.

God only is able to teach or shew us the things which we know not.

Men alone cannot. Christ said to his Disciples, when he commissioned them, (*Matth.* 28. 19.) *Go teach all Nations.* And (*Eph.* 4. 11.) *When he ascended up on high, he gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers*;

Teachers; yet no Teachers can bring home instruction without the teachings of God. The tenour of the new Covenant runs thus, (*Isa.* 54. 13.) *All thy children shall be taught of the Lord.* And again (*Jer.* 31. 34.) *They shall teach no more every one his neighbour*, &c. that is, they shall not be left to the teachings of man: or the teaching of God shall be so glorious, that all shall acknowledge it; though there be instruments, yet the flowing forth of the spirit shall be such, that instruments and means shall be little taken notice of. For when he saith, *they shall not teach every one his neighbour*, it is not an absolute Negative, but shews that there shall be a more excellent teaching; as when the Apostle saith (2 *Cor.* 3. 6.) *Christ hath made us able Ministers, not of the letter, but of the Spirit*; This Negative is not absolute, for the Apostles did teach the Letter, and the Spirit is usually conveyed by the Ministery of the letter, or of the external word; the word is (as it were) the chariot wherein the Spirit rideth, and cometh by the ear to the heart. So that, when *Paul* saith, *We are Ministers not of the letter*, &c. his meaning is, we are rather, or we are more the Ministers of the Spirit then of the letter. The inward teaching accompanying our Ministery, carryeth the matter, both for conviction and conversion, both for illumination and consolation, not the outward teaching (*John* 6. 45.) *Every man therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me.* And how long soever we go to School to men, how long soever we sit under the Ministery of the ablest Gospel Preachers in the world, we come not to Christ till the Father teacheth; till he joyn his inward teaching to the outward teaching of the Minister, the light and life of grace is not received. It is God who teacheth effectually, men teach but instrumentally. Thus it was prophesied of the Gospel times (*Isa.* 2. 3. & *Micah* 4. 2.) *Many Nations shall come and say, Come and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, and to the House of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his wayes, and we will walk in his paths*, that is, he will accompany the Ministers and messengers of his word with his Spirit, he will impower them from on high, and so we shall learn his Statutes, and understand his wayes. *David* ascribes even his skill in Military affairs to Gods teaching, (*Psal.* 144. 1.) *Blessed be the Lord, my strength, who teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight.* God only teacheth a man powerfully to be a good Souldier. Surely then, it is

is God only who teacheth us to be good Christians, to be Believers, to be holy. *He hath his seat in heaven, who teacheth hearts on earth.*

Secondly, As these words hold out to us the temper of an humble sinner;

Note.

A gracious humble soul is teachable, or is willing to be taught.

As it is the duty of the Ministers of the Gospel *to be apt to teach*, that's their special gift, or characteristical property; so 'tis the peoples duty and grace to be apt to be taught, to be willing to be led, and instructed; naturally we are unteachable and untractable. As we know nothing of God savingly by nature, so we are not willing to know; we would sit down in our ignorance, or at most in a form of knowledge. To be willing to learn, is the first, or rather the second step to learning. The first is a sight of our ignorance; and the second, a readiness to be taught, and entertain the means of knowledge.

Thirdly, The words being the form of a Prayer;

Note.

It is our duty to entreat the Lord earnestly that he would teach us what we know not.

It is a great favour and a mercy, that God will teach us, that he will be our master, our Tutor. Now, as we are to ask and pray for every mercy, so for this, that God would vouchsafe to be our Teacher, (*Psal.* 25. 4, 5.) *Shew me thy wayes, O Lord, teach me thy paths*; *Lead me in thy truth, and teach me*; *David* spake it twice in prayer, *Lead me*, and *Teach me*: Lead me on in the truth which I know, and teach me the truths which I know not. So he prayeth again, (*Psal.* 119. 26.) *Teach me thy Statutes, make me to understand the way of thy precepts.* *David* was convinced that he could not understand the Statutes of God, unless God would be his Teacher; though he could read the Statutes of God, and understand the language of them, yet he did not understand the Spirit of them till he was taught (and taught) of God, and therefore he prayed so earnestly, once and again, for his teaching. When *Philip* put that question to the Eunuch (*Acts* 8. 30.) *Understandest thou what thou readest? He said, how can I except some man*

man should guide me? Or, unless I am taught. Though we read the Statutes of God, and read them every day, yet we shall know little unless the Lord teach us. *Solomon* made it his request for all Israel at the solemn Dedication of the Temple, (1 *Kings* 8. 37.) *Teach them the good way wherein they should walk.* God who is our Commander is also our Counseller.

Fourthly, From the special matter wherein this penitent person would be taught, which is plain from part of the latter verse, *If I have done iniquity*;

Note.

A gracious heart is willing to know and see the worst of himself.

He would have God teach him what iniquity he hath done. *David* was often upon that prayer, (*Psal.* 139. 24.) *Search me, O God, and know my heart, and see if there be any wicked way in me.* Lord, shew me my sin; as I would not conceal my sin from thee, so I would not have my sin concealed from my self. A carnal man who lives in sin (though possibly he may pray for knowledge in some things, and would be a knowing man, yet he) hath no minde that either God or man should shew him his sin; He loves not to see the worst of himself, his dark part; he as little loves to see his sin, as to have it seen. But a godly man never thinks he seeth his sin enough; *how little soever he sins, he thinks he sins too much,* (that's the general bent of a gracious mans heart) *and how much soever he sees his sin, he thinks he sees it too little.* And therefore as he tells God what he knows of his sin, so he would have God tell him that of his sin which he doth not know. *That which I know not, teach thou me.*

If I *have done iniquity,* I *will do no more.*

There are two special parts of repentance. First, Confession of sin, whether known or unknown. This we have in the former part of the verse, *That which* I *see not, teach thou me.* There is the confession of sin, even of unknown sin. The second part of repentance is reformation or amendment, a turning from sin, a forsaking of that iniquity which we desire God would shew us, we have this second part of repentance in this latter part of the verse.

If

If I *have done iniquity,* I *will do no more.* But why doth he say, *If* I *have*? &c. Had he any any doubt whether he had done iniquity or no? every man must confess, down right, that he hath sinned, and done iniquity, without ifs or an's. *Solomon* having made such a supposition in his prayer at the Dedication of the Temple, (1 *Kings* 8. 46.) *If they sin against thee*) presently puts it into this position, *for there is no man that sinneth not.* The Apostle concludes, (1 *John* 1. 8.) *If we say we have no sin, we deceive our selves, and the truth is not in us.* Therefore, this, *If I have done iniquity* is not to be understood as if this or that man, as if he or any man might be without sin; but when the penitent is brought in, saying, *If I have done iniquity*; his meaning is, First, What ever iniquity I have done, I am willing to leave it, to abandon it, I will do so no more. Secondly, Thus, If I *have done iniquity,* that is, if I have done any great iniquity, if I have acted perversenes, or perversly, as the word signifieth, I will do so no more; to do iniquity is more then barely to sin. As if he had said, *though* I *cannot promise that I will sin no more, yet, Lord, if thou dost discover to me any iniquity, any gross sin or perverseneſſe, I will do that no more,* I will engage my self against that sin with all my might; and to the utmost of my power, by grace received, I will keep my self pure from every sin. *If I have done iniquity.*

עוֹל *Perverse agere.*

Hence Note. First,

A godly man hath a gracious suspition of himself that he hath done evil, yea some great evil, that he hath done amiss, yea greatly amiss, though he be not able to charge himself with this or that particular iniquity.

He knoweth he hath sinned & done evil, though he knoweth not every evil he hath done, nor how sinfully he may have sinned; he doubts it may be worse with him then he seeth. Possibly *he hath done iniquity. Job* in reference to his children (*chap.* 1. 5.) had an holy suspition that in their feasting they might sin against God; he knew no sin they had run into, nor could charge them with any excess; but he was jealous they had sinned; nor did *Job* speak thus, as if his meaning were, that possibly in their feasting some corruption might work in them, (he knew there is no man in the best duties of his life wholly freed from the workings of sin) but he had this jealousie, that they might have fallen into some great

sin, and so provoked God greatly against them, therefore he did (as it were) way-lay such guilt, and early sought reconciliation with God. As *Job* was thus jealous of his children, so a gracious heart, though he cannot charge himselfe with this or that evill, yet he is apt to suspect his owne heart, and feares it may be worse with him, then possibly, it is.

Secondly, When he saith, *If I have done iniquity*; This humble man, though he doth suppose that he might have done iniquity, yet he doth but suppose it.

Hence note.

A godly man may live free from the doing of any grosse sin.

He doth not put an *if* upon it whether he had sinned or no, but, whether he had done iniquity. *Zachariah* and *Elizabeth* were not without sin, but they did no iniquity; for, saith the text (*Luke* 1. 6.) *They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandements and ordinances of the Lord blamelesse.* It cannot be imagined but that the people of *Israel* sinned, yet (*Num:* 23. 21.) *God saw no iniquity in Jacob, nor perverseneſſe in Israel.* There may be such a time in the Church when the people of God have no iniquity, no provocation to be seene or found among them. Though a Godly man cannot deny but he hath sinned, yet he can affirme that he hath not indulged himselfe in any sin. *If I have done iniquity,*

I will doe no more.

The Hebrew is, *I will not adde.* We render, *I will doe no more.* As if he had sayd; If upon tryall, it be found that I have done iniquity, yet I will not adde iniquity to iniquity, I will not goe on, I will not persist, nor proceed in iniquity. I will not take a step more in any way which God shall discover to me to be an evill way. If I am out of the way, I will not goe on in my way.

Hence observe.

First, *A godly penitent person is resolute against sin.*

His will is set against it; *I will doe no more.* I shewed in opening the former verse (*It is meete to be sayd unto God, I have borne chastisement, I will offend no more*) in what sence a godly man may make such a promise, or say, *I will sin no more*; here I say, *A godly man is resolute against sin, especially against great sins.* As a carnall man hath but very weake resolves for the doing of good, he hath (as some expresse it) but a *velleity*, somewhat like a will to doe that which is good; so a carnall man makes but weake resolves against evill, he hath not a setled will, but a kind of *noleity* against it. He makes some flourishes of profession against it, but he is not resolvedly ingaged against it; whereas a godly man is resolute both as to the doing of good, and the not doing of evill. If a godly man might have his will, he would never sin more; And as a Godly man waiteth joyfully for that state of glory wherein he shall sin no more; so a resolution to sin no more, hath, as I may say, somewhat of glory in it. In glory we shall sin no more, and where grace is in truth, that soule would gladly be rid of sin, and sin no more. A godly man is resolved against all ungodlinesse; and this is a kind of entrance into glory.

Againe, Whereas the penitent man saith, *I will doe no more.*

Note.

Continuance in any knowne sin (for, saith he, *what I know not teach thou me*) *or in that which is made knowne to us to be sinfull, is inconsistent with true repentance.*

Repentance for and continuance in sin, cannot consist in the same subject. This is the voyce of every gracious soule, I would not sin any more, or I would not continue any longer in sin. To sin is common to man, but to continue in sin, is proper to a wicked man. To erre and faile that's humane, but to persevere in error is diabolicall. Sin will continue in us while we continue in this world; but they that are not of the world, doe not, will not continue in sin, how long so ever they are in the world. Sin may be considered three wayes. First, as remaining in us; Secondly, as reserved; Thirdly, as preserved by us. There is sin remaining in the best of Saints on this side heaven (*Rom:* 7. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24.) Sin is reserved only in carnall men, they save their sins, and would be saved, not from but in their sins. Sin is preserved or maintained and defended in the worst of wicked men. Sin is heightned to the utmost, where 'tis not only retained, but maintained and preserved. The Apostle having closed the fifth Chapter of his Epistle to the *Romanes*, in the triumph of Gospel grace, *That as sin hath reigned unto death, so grace might reigne through righ-*

righteouſneſſe unto eternall life by Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, begins the next with a prevention of the abuſe of this Grace ; *What ſhall we ſay then, ſhall we continue in ſin that grace may abound? God forbid. How ſhall we that are dead to ſin, live any longer therein?* How can we continue in ſin, that are partakers of Goſpel grace? Sin will continue in us, but we cannot continue in it. The queſtion implyeth a kind of impoſſibility. We were once dead in ſin, but now we are dead to ſin, how then can we live or continue in it? *Perſeverance is either our beſt or our worſt.* To perſevere is beſt when we perſevere in good, and to perſevere is worſt when we perſevere in evill. It is bad to be or doe evill, but it is worſe to abide in evill. The firſt beſt is not to ſin, the next beſt is not to continue, nor lodge in ſin, no not for an houre. *Paul* ſayd in another caſe (*Gal:* 2. 5.) *To whom we gave place by ſubjection, no not for an houre*; We ſhould nor give place to ſin, no not for a minute, but reſiſt it to the utmoſt, and totally diſplace it, if we can.

Laſtly, From the Hebrew elegancy, which ſaith, I *will not adde.*

Note.

A godly man may commit ſin after ſin, but he doth not adde ſin to ſin.

When he hath committed any one ſin, he breaks it off and deſtroyeth it by repentance. He doth not adde ſin to ſin, becauſe the ſin formerly committed is deſtroyed by repentance. His former ſin is taken off the file before he acts a ſecond, who heartily repenteth of the firſt, and as heartily reſolveth not to commit a ſecond. Such a man doth not run a round of ſinning and repenting, though he ſinneth after he hath repented. *Daniel* gave that advice to *Nebuchadnezzar* (Dan: 4. 27.) *Break off thy ſins by righteouſneſſe, and thine iniquities by ſhewing mercy to the poore.* If thou repentett indeed, the ſin that cometh after will not be added to thy former, becauſe that is done away through Grace. A godly man (according to the former poynt) would not adde or commit another act of ſin to his former; as it is ſayd of *Judah* (Gen: 38. 26.) who had committed folly with *Tamar*, *He knew her againe no more.* Though his ſin was great, yet doubtleſſe his heart was humbled, and he returned not to his former ſin. But the wicked

wicked man continues in his wickedneſſe, yea, he *bleſſeth himſelfe in his heart, ſaying, I ſhall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to adde drunkenneſſe to thirſt* (Deut: 29. 19.) Every new ſin is an addition to his former ſins, becauſe he alwayes liveth in ſin. They who would not have the captives brought into the City, gave this reaſon (2 *Chron:* 28. 13.) *For whereas we have offended againſt the Lord already, ye intend to adde more to our ſins*, &c. O take heed of ſinning ſo, as to joyne ſins together. As in Arithmeticke when we adde ſumme to ſumme, what an huge ſumme may we quickly make. Therefore breake off ſin by repentance, that if thou ſinneſt againe, it may not be an adding of ſin to ſin. That's a dreadfull propheſie and threatning (*Pſal:* 69. 27.) *Adde iniquity to their iniquity, and let them not come into thy righteouſneſſe.* How doth the Lord adde iniquity to iniquity? will he cauſe any to ſin more? or will he doe any iniquity? No; the meaning is (as our margin intimates) the Lord will adde the puniſhment of their iniquity to their iniquity; or he will give them up to the power of their owne luſts and vile affections, ſo that they cannot but renew the acts of ſin, and adde one iniquity to another. It is a bleſſed worke when we are much in the additions of grace to grace, and of good workes to good. 'Tis the deſigne and buſineſſe of a gracious heart to adde grace to grace, that is, the exerciſe of one grace to another, till every grace be exerciſed (2 *Pet:* 1. 5.) *Give diligence to adde to your faith vertue, and to vertue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience.* Here is a bleſſed addition. When a good man hath done well once, he adds to doe more, he adds more acts of the ſame kind, and he adds to doe good acts of any other kinde; He adds patience to godlineſſe, and to godlineſſe brotherly kindneſs, and to brotherly kindneſs charity; thus he is buſied in a bleſſed way of addition. But the addition of ſin to ſin, is the bitter fruit of rebellion againſt God (*Iſa.* 30. 1.) *Wo to the rebellious children — that cover, but not with a covering of my Spirit, that they may adde ſin to ſin.* They that make excuſes for ſin committed, adde ſin to ſin; yet by theſe coverings, we may underſtand not only excuſes and pretences, for ſin acted, but our owne good acts; for to cover ſin with any thing of our owne, is to adde ſin to ſin. Yet I conceive, the adding of one kind of ſin to another, is the addition there meant. The *Iſraelites*

ſayd

sayd to *Samuel*, when they were brought to a sight of their sin (1 *Sam:* 12. 19.) *We have added unto all our sins this evill to ask us a King.* They refused the Lords government, and asked a king in the pride of their hearts, and so added sin to sin. Thus 'tis sayd of *Herod* (Luke 3. 20.) *That to all his evill deeds, he added this, that he shut up John in prison.* And as there is an adding of severall kinds of sin, so of severall acts of the same kind of sin, oath to oath, and adultery to adultery, and wrong-dealing to wrong-dealing; this day some oppresse their brethren, and the next day they doe the same. O let such remember what additions the Lord will make to them, he will adde punishment to punishment, he will adde the same kind of punishment several times, he will adde sword to sword, and famine to famine, and pestilence to pestilence, and he will adde punishments of various kinds. The Prophet reports what various or (if I may so speake) heterogeneal kindes of sin men added and strung up together. (*Hos:* 4. 2.) *By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out and blood toucheth blood.* Surely, God will make blood touch blood in a way of punishment, as men make blood touch blood in a way of sin. The adding of sins makes an addition of plagues. *When Jehoiakim the King heard the roll read, he threw it into the fire and burnt it* (Jer: 36.) but could he burne or make an end of the threatnings? no (*v.* 32.) *And there were added besides unto them many like words.* It is sayd (*Rev:* 22. 18.) *If any man shall adde unto these things, God shall adde unto him the plagues that are written in this booke.* To adde any thing to the holy word of God, is as sinfull as to take from the word, or act against it. God can adde plagues as fast as men adde sins. When sin is added to sin, then guilt is added to guilt, and punishment to punishment. Take heed of this addition, resolve with the penitent soule in the text; *If I have done iniquity, I will adde no more.*

JOB,

JOB. Chap. 34. Vers. 33, 34, 35.

Should it be according to thy mind? he will recompence it whether thou refuse, or whether thou chuse, and not I: therefore speak what thou knowest.
Let men of understanding tell me, and let a wise man hearken unto me.
Job hath spoken without knowledge, and his words were without wisdome.

IN the Context of these three verses *Elihu* doth chiefly these two things. First, he appeales to the Conscience of *Job* (v. 33.) *Should it be according to thy mind?* ask thy selfe whether it should be so, yea or no. Secondly, he appeals to the judgement of *Jobs* friends, yea of all wise and understanding men, concerning what *Job* had spoken, or whether he had not spoken unwisely, in the 33d and 34th verses; *Let men of understanding tell me, and let a wise man hearken unto me. Job hath spoken without knowledge, and his words were without wisdome.*

The scope of *Elihu* in these words is yet further to humble *Job*, and to provoke him to repentance for his inconsiderate speeches. Yet *Elihu* doth not call *Job* to repentance upon the same grounds or termes as his three friends had done. They moved him to repentance upon the Consideration of his former wicked life, as they supposed; but *Elihu* moves him to repentance upon the Consideration of his imprudent and rash speeches under the afflicting hand of God.

Vers. 33. *Should it be according to thy mind?*

This verse is delivered in as much variety as any text thorowout the whole Book; and as a learned writer upon it concludes; *If we should stay upon all the various readings, translations, and interpretations of it, we should rather darken then enlighten, rather entangle both hearers and readers, then unfold the text.* There are at least six distinct translations of this verse, which I shall passe only with the naming of them, and then proceed to open the words as they stand in our owne; which comprehends the summe and

Si omnes lectiones versiones interpretationes persequeremur, plus tenebrarum quam lucis afferemus. Pined:

and substance of what is held out in most of them.

First, Some give it thus; *Should he reward it according to thy minde, though thou hast despised the one, and chosen the other, yet will not I, therefore speake what thou knowest.* As if he had sayd, *Why should God reward him, as thou wouldest have him doe it? Though thou hast refused to submit to Gods mercy, and hast called for justice, yet* I *dare not doe so. If thou know better teach me.*

Secondly, Another thus; *Should it come from thee, how he should recompence it, when thou hast refused his correction? but thou shalt choose and not* I, *therefore speake what thou knowest.* The sence of which translation may be thus represented; *Shouldest thou who hast sinned, and refusest to be corrected, teach God how he should correct thee? Thou mayest thinke so, but* I *doe not, shew me better if thou canst.*

Thirdly, *Should that come from thee, which he will punish?* I *speak it, because thou hast refused Gods correction, because thou hast chosen that which* I *would not. Now speak what thou knowest.* As if he had sayd; *Why shouldest thou speak against Gods proceedings, to bring further trouble upon thee? my desire of easing thee is the cause, why* I *speak thus;* I *should never have accused God as thou hast done, if* I *had been so handled by him. But if thou hast any thing to except against what* I *say, speak freely.*

Fourthly, *Did such a speech come from thee? He will recompence it, that thou hast rejected him; But thou chooseſt this way and not* I: *now speak what thou knowest.* As if *Elihu* had thus expressed himselfe to *Job*; I *never heard thee speak so humbly, as* I *have taught thee* (v. 31, 32.) *Surely God will punish thee, because thou hast spoken proudly against his proceedings with thee. But this is nothing to me, who like not of such courses. If thou canst defend thy selfe, so doe.*

An ergo (hæc oratio professa est) a te? reprendet illud si spreveris (sc: hac oratione uti, &c. Jun: Thus *Junius* connecting this verse with the former, wherein is shewed what a penitent person should say to God, translates and expounds the whole to this sence; *Now therefore consider, hast thou spoken in such a manner, surely God will recompence it to thee, if thou refuseſt to speak so,* (thus he deterreth him by the consideration of the event, or of what might follow upon his refusal, and then he deterreth him by his owne example) *but if thou chooseſt to doe otherwise, truely* I *will not.* (Thou shalt goe alone for me) *Now then speak what thou thinkeſt.*

Fifthly,

Fifthly, Should therefore God recompence that which man hath done according to thine opinion, saying, because thou dislikest this, it is but equall, that thou shouldest choose another and not I. And what doest thou know? speake man.

An igitur ex tua opinione reprendet deus illud quod homo fecerit dicendo, &c? Pisc:

Sixthly, Mr *Broughton* renders thus; *Should that come from thee which he will punish; as thou doest loath, as thou likest, where I would not? Now speake what thou thinkest.*

All these rendrings may be reduced to this one common sence; *O Job, whatsoever thou sufferest, or by what meanes soever thou art fallen into this misery, is it fit that God should be ordered by thy opinion and Judgement? And surely, O Job, I must tell thee plainly, nor canst thou deny it, that thou hast not rested nor sat down quietly in the determination and decree of God concerning thee; But thou wouldest rather be chusing and prescribing to God, how and in what way he should deale with thee, and dispence his providences to thee, then satisfie thy selfe in his appoyntments and pleasure. Farre be it from me, that I should follow thy example, or tread in thy steps as to this matter; yet if thou hast any thing to reply to what I have urged, say onne, bring it forth, let me and all in thy presence, heare and judge of it.*

Thus *Elihu* poynts *Job* to his grand error, that he did not readily approve, nor quietly submit to the Judgement of God in his owne case. And so had not spoken reverently enough of God, nor humbly enough of himselfe.

The reason of these various readings and rendrings mentioned, is the conciseneſs of the Hebrew text, which leaves some words to be understood and supplyed for the compleating of the sense. And because the most skilfull Interpreters are not perfectly acquainted with the dialect or manner of speech used in those more remote and ancient times, therefore they must needs differ both in their translations and expositions, yet (which may free the reader from all prejudices against the holy Scriptures, either as obscure or dubious) they all center and agree in that which is true in it selfe, as also in the principall scope and drift of *Elihu* in this discourse with *Job*.

Having thus given some account of the various translations of this verse, I shall now close with the explication of our owne.

Should it be according to thy mind?

Thus *Elihu* beſpeaks *Job*; *Should it be?* he doth not ſay what, but leaves us to the whole matter, ſhould this, or that, or tother thing, or any thing be according to thy mind? the Hebrew text is but one word, which we tranſlate, *according to thy mind*, or, *as thou wouldſt have it?* ſhould it be from thee? that is, ſhould God take counſell or direction from thee? or goe to thee as an Oracle to be taught which way to deal with thee, or with any man elſe, ſhould it be from thee? The matter which *Elihu* inſiſts upon, reſpects the providence of God; So his meaning is, ſhould God cut out the workes of providence according to thy order? ſhould God reward, or ſhould God puniſh? ſhould God ſet up, or ſhould God pull down? ſhould God bring trouble, or ſhould God cauſe peace according to thy mind? muſt he needs ask counſell of thee, before he proceed to any of theſe reſolutions? no!

הטעמך

Num ex tuo conſilio et arbitratu rependet illud ſc: bonum vel malum, ſed de malo proprie accipio. Merc:

He will recompence it whether thou refuſe, or whether thou chuſe.

The former part of the verſe, is a queſtion or Interrogation, *Should it be according to thy mind? He will recompence*, &c. That's the anſwer; and it containes both a negative and an affirmative, he will not doe according to thy mind, but he will doe according to his own; *He will recompence it.*

ישל כנה *a radice* שלם

The verb ſignifies to pay, or appeaſe, and make quiet, and the reaſon why the ſame word ſignifieth paying, or recompencing, and peace, is becauſe where payment is made, peace is obtained, where recompence is given, there quietneſs is ſetled; *He will recompence, or he will pay*, that is, give out and diſtribute in his providences as he pleaſeth.

Whether thou chuſe, or whether thou refuſe.

There are two ſpeciall acts of the will, chuſing and refuſing; and theſe two are Intrinſecall and Eſſentiall to the will; as the proper act of the underſtanding is to apprehend, and then to aſſent; ſo upon thoſe repreſentations which the underſtanding makes to the will, the will doth either refuſe or chuſe; and the word which we here tranſlate to *refuſe*, ſignifies more then that ſimple act of the will, it ſignifies to refuſe with a kind of diſdain and

מאס *denotat rejicere cum faſtidio tanquam vile et cõtemptum quid.*

and great diſguſt; to refuſe a thing as altogether unworthy to be received; or to refuſe a thing as being much diſpleaſed and burdened with it. *Eliphaz* uſeth this word (*Chap:* 5. 17.) *Deſpiſe thou not the chaſtening of the Lord*; that is, doe not refuſe it with a diſlike, or as a thing that is grievous and nauſeous to thee. That which is contrary to our appetite, the ſtomack refuſeth and vomits it up againe; ſuch a force there is in this word, he will recompence it, *whether* and how much ſoever *thou refuſe*

or whether thou chuſe.

He puts that in to ſhew that it is neither the refuſall of man that ſtops God, nor is it the choyce of man that brings God onne to his worke, he will proceed purely from himſelfe; he will recompence whether thou refuſeſt, or whether thou chuſe, *and not I.*

As if he had ſayd, it is God that will doe it, it is God that will bring this upon thee, *and not I*; that's the ſenſe of our reading; But according to other readings, *and not I*, referrs, to *thou*; doe thou refuſe or chuſe whether thou wilt obey the diſpenſation or no, for my part I will not ſtand upon thoſe termes with God, but referre my ſelfe wholly to his diſpoſe.

From the words thus opened (*Should it be according to thy mind?* &c.

Obſerve; Firſt.

Man would have every thing goe according to his mind.

He would have his mind the meaſure both of all that he is to doe for God; and of all that God doth to him. We love to doe all things according to our own minds, and we love to have all things done according to our own minds: man naturally would doe nothing according to Gods mind; nor would he have any thing done to him according to Gods mind, unleſſe it accord with his owne too. The Apoſtle (*Rom:* 8. 7.) proclaimes that Innate Enmity that is in the heart of all men naturally againſt the mind and will of God; *The wiſdome of the fleſh is Enmity againſt God: It is not ſubject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be*; that is, while a man remaines fleſh, in an unregenerate ſtate, he is altogether at enmity againſt the Law of God; that is, both againſt what God appoynts us to doe, and againſt what he appoynts him

him to suffer. Man equally riseth up in his thoughts, and rebells against both. And as this enmity doth remaine whole and unbroken in all men by nature, till they are renewed by grace and borne againe; so there are remainders of it, even in those who are renewed by grace; there is somewhat of this opposition against God in every godly man; he would fain have things goe according to his mind; and he hath much of this mind in him; I doe not say, a godly man would doe nothing according to Gods mind, that's the naturall mans frame; but a godly man would very fain have God doe things according to his mind, as may appeare, especially in foure things.

First, He would have God reward, or doe good both to himselfe and others, according to his mind; He would have God lift up those whom he would have lifted up, and preferre those whom he would have preferr'd; he would faine have God shew favour to or bestow favours upon those whom he favours.

Secondly, As to punishment and Judgement, he would have God punish according to his mind; such a man is proud, he is an oppressor, he is an opposer of goodnesse and good men, therefore he would have the hand of God heavy upon him, to cast him down out of hand, or without delay.

Thirdly, He would have God goe according to his mind in chastning and afflicting himselfe; though he would not be totally uncorrected, yet he would have God correct him only in such a kind, in such a manner and measure as he would chuse; he doth not refuse chastening, but he would be chastened in what himselfe pleaseth, or in his owne way. He saith in his heart, if God would correct me in this or that, I could bear it, but I doe not like to be corrected in such a thing, or in such a way; one saith, if God would smite me in my Estate I could bear it, but not in my body; Another saith, if God should smite me with sicknesse, I could bear it, but not in my Children; or let the affliction be what God pleaseth, if God would afflict me but thus much, or thus farre, in such a degree, I could submit, but my heart can hardly yeild to this measure of affliction. Thus we would have it according to our minds, as to the measure, as also for the continuance of our afflictions. We would be corrected for so long, for so many dayes, but to have months of vanity, and yeares of trouble, this is not according to our mind.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, He would have God govern (not only himselfe but) the whole world according to his mind: Man hath much of this in him, he would have God order nations as himselfe and other men like himselfe desire. Some one man would prescribe and direct what God should doe, and how he should doe to all men. *Luther* writ to *Melanchton* when he was so exceedingly troubled at the providences of God in the world; *Our Brother Philip is to be admonisht, that he would forbear governing the world*; we can hardly let God alone to rule that world which himselfe alone hath made; *Should it be according to thy mind?* to this mans mind, or that mans mind? it must not be as it is; if every man might have his mind, he would govern and rule the world in another way then God doth. There is scarce any Good man that is satisfied in the government of particular nations, if he might have his mind, he would cast things into another mould and method then the providence of God hath cast them in at this day. Yea, 'tis seldome, that it either raines or shines according to our mind; The weather which God is pleased to send, whether wet or dry, fayre or foule, rarely pleaseth us.

Admonendus est Philippus ut desinat mundum regere.

Secondly, When *Elihu* saith, *Should it be according to thy mind?* This question implyeth a strong Negation; certainly, it should not.

Hence note.

'Tis beside the duty and above the line of man to desire that things should be according to his mind, either with himselfe or with others.

There's nothing more against the mind of God, nor against our owne good, then that all things should be according to our mind; we may quickly undoe our selves and dishonour God by having our owne desires. And that it is sinfull, very sinfull to desire to have our owne desires, may appeare, by considering the spring or roote of such desires, I shall shew a three-fold very evill roote from whence those desires spring.

First, They spring from pride and an over-weening conceit of our selves; and that upon a double account; First, from pride as to our deserts; for if God doe such men good, they are apt to think they have deserved more good, then God hath done them; and if God afflict them, they are ready to say, surely they have

not

not deserved so much affliction. We think we have deserved greater kindness then God exhibits; and that we have not deserved so great a crosse as he inflicts. Is not this a great piece of pride?

Againe, These desires spring from pride in our own wisdome & understanding; as if we knew how to order matters more equally then God. Is it not a huge piece of pride, of luciferian pride, to thinke that there might be a better measure of things then the mind of God is? doth not such a man make himselfe wiser then God? and more prudent then God? doth not he suppose, that he sees further into things then God? when as alas we cannot see an houre before us, but God hath the prospect of all things, He seeth *the end from the beginning*, and hath all in his eye from all Eternity. When we thus make our selves wiser then God, is not this a high poynt of pride? Here's the first evill roote of desiring to have things according to our mind, *pride*, or an opinion that we deserve better, or could order things better.

Secondly, These desires proceed as from pride, so from discontent with the dealings of God, and 'tis pride that fills us with discontent; he that would have things according to his minde, must needs be disatisfied when they are not.

Thirdly, when they spring not from direct discontent, yet they do from some degree of impatience. There is not such a quietness of spirit or acquiescence as should be in the heart of man, otherwise he would let things be according unto Gods minde, and never be troubled, when they are not according to his own. Now consider what can spring from these three roots, Pride, Discontent, and Impatience, but very evil and bitter fruit; therefore, to desire to have things according to our mind is very sinful, exceeding sinful.

Thirdly, This question, *Should it be according to thy minde?* implyeth a sharp rebuke and a reproof upon *Job*, as desiring a thing which was altogether against rule and reason.

Hence Note.

It is most unreasonable and absurd, to desire that things should be ordered as we would have them, and not as God would have them.

Is it not unreasonable in a family that things should be as the children would have them, and not as the Father would have them? Or, that things should be done according to the minde of the servants, and not according to the minde of the Master? Do not the Magistrates and Governours of the world think it an unreasonable thing that Nations should be governed according to the minde of Subjects, and not according to the minde of the Prince, regulated according to the known Laws of the Nation? Who doth not think it an unreasonable thing, that a journey should be disposed according to the minde of the Horse, and not according to the minde of the Rider? Should the horse guide the Rider, or the Rider his horse? Is it not an unreasonable thing that a mans sense should guide his understanding, when his understanding is given on purpose to guide his sense? Is it not an unreasonable thing that passion should order reason, when as reason should be the bridle of our passion? Is it not an unreasonable thing that unlearned ignorant men should teach the knowing, when the learned & knowing are set up to teach the ignorant? and is it not much more absurd and unreasonable for us, to desire that things should be according to our minde, either with our selves or others, families, or Nations, and not according to the minde of God? Should things be as the best, as the wisest, as the holyest men in the world would have them, and not as God would have them; it were more absurd and unreasonable then that things should go in a family according to the minde of the servants and children, rather then according to the minde of the Master and Father; yea it were more absurd then any of those fore-mentioned absurdities. *Should it be according to thy minde*, O *Job*? how unreasonable a thing were that!

Fourthly, From those words, *He will recompence it, whether thou refuse, or whether thou chuse.*

Note.

God will not yeild to men, nor be subject to their pleasure.

God will do what he pleaseth, as I may say, in spight of any mans teeth. Things must pass in such a way as God hath appointed, and sees meet to dispose of them; and not as we would have them. *He will recompence*: God is resolute for the doing of his own will, and men are usually over-resolute for the doing of theirs; and indeed some are as it were wholly changed into will, or rather wilfulness;

fulneſs, *they will do this, and they will do that; they will have this, and they will have that*. Men may quickly, but God can never act too highly, too ſtrongly, too confidently upon his own will; the reaſon is, becauſe his will is an holy will, and the rule of righteouſneſs. Only Conſider from the whole.

Man is never diſpleaſed with what God doth, till he forgetteth what himſelf is.

Man forgets that he is a worm, and no man, he forgets that he is a creature, he forgets himſelf to be duſt and aſhes, elſe his ſpirit would not be wrought up to ſuch a height, to have things go according to his minde, and not according to the minde and will of God.

And ſeeing God will have every thing go according to his minde and will, know there's no ſtriving nor ſtrugling with God; if man will not bow to the will of God, he ſhall be broken by the will of God: if he will not ſubmit to it, he muſt fall by it. There's no avoiding one of theſe two, *for he will recompence*. Therefore let us yeild up our ſelves freely to God, to be ruled by him, and not ſet him the rule, no nor ſo much as give him advice; let us receive the Law, and take advice from him. *God is our Commander, but we muſt not be ſo much as his Councellors*. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of the eternal purpoſes and decrees of God, ſaith (*Rom.* 11. 34.) *Who hath been his Counceller?* As God had none to counſel him concerning his eternal purpoſes, ſo we muſt not adventure to couſel him as to his daylie providences or diſpenſations, either toward our ſelves, or others; the true rule of our life is, to yeild our ſelves to be ruled by God. *He will recompence it, whether we chuſe, or whether we refuſe.*

And not I.

As if he had ſaid, If thou wilt ſtruggle with the will of God, thou mayeſt, but I will not. God will go his own way, and do as he ſees good, ſay thou what thou canſt, or howſoever it pleaſe or diſpleaſe thee. And for mine own part, I dare not entertain or give way to a thought of preſcribing to him in any of theſe things, what he ſhould do; no nor be unſatisfied with, much leſs cenſure, what he hath done. Therefore, if thou canſt acquit thy ſelf of this crime and accuſation which I have laid to thy charge, as

as thou didſt theirs who ſpake before, do it, ſay what thou canſt for thy ſelf.

Hence Note.

He that ſees another do amiſs, ought to take heed of doing the like himſelf.

Again, As theſe words, *and not I*, refer to the word *recompence*, *He will recompence, whether thou chuſe, or whether thou refuſe*; the meaning of them may be conceived, as if *Elihu* had thus beſpoken *Job*, *If thou doſt ſmart for thy pride, and the height of thy ſpirit, if God pay thee home for it, do not lay the fault upon me; I have given thee counſel to direct thee better, I deſire not thou ſhouldeſt come under ſuch a handling, but certainly God will do it*. When we have declar'd the minde and will of God, in the ſeverity of his judgements upon ſinners, it is good for us to ſay, God will do it, and not we. The Prophet *Jeremiah* (chap. 17. 16.) having warned them of an evil day, addes, *Nor have I deſired the woful day, Lord thou knoweſt it*: *Jeremy* had ſpoken woful things againſt that people, but (ſaith he) I have not deſired that woful day, though I have propheſied of it. So *Elihu* ſeems to ſpeak, he will recompence, and *not I*; though it be not in my minde, yet I aſſure thee 'tis the mind of God.

Yet further, Some read theſe words with the former as an Interrogation or rebuking queſtion made by God himſelf; *What? Should you chuſe, and not I? Election or choice is my priviledge, not thine, thou muſt not think to preſcribe to me. I will chaſten and afflict, as I think fit, or according to my own will, not according to thine. Thus he brings in God ſpeaking to Job; thou ſindeſt thy ſelf much aggrieved, and complaineſt that thou art afflicted more then is meete; It ſhould ſeem then, that I muſt do what thou thinkeſt fit, not what I think fit my ſelf. Surely thou muſt give me the rule, how much, how long, and in what manner I muſt correct both thy ſelf and others*. Should you chuſe, and not I: How uncomely!

Verba Dei ſic Mimeſin eſſe puto. Merc

Therefore ſpeak what thou knoweſt.

Here *Elihu* gives *Job* time to reply, as he had done (at the 33d chap. verſ. 5.) as if he had ſaid, *If thou knoweſt any thing againſt what I have ſpoken, or art able to make any objection againſt it, ſpeak*;

if thou thinkest I have not spoken right, shew me my errour, and spare not.

Hence Note, First;

When we have declar'd what we judge to be the minde of God in any case, we should give others liberty of speaking their minds also.

This is my opinion, speak what thou canst against it; we should speak (2 *Cor.* 1. 24.) *Not as having Dominion over the faith of others, but as helpers of their joy*; The Ministers of Christ must speak as Servants to, not as Lords of the faith of others. *Elihu* did not carry it as a Lord over the faith of *Job*; but left him to make good his own opinion and practise if he could.

Secondly Note.

Knowledge is the fountain of Speech.

We need no other light to speak by then that of reason, the understanding should feed the Tongue; we must not speak at a venture, but keep to Rule and take our ayme. The Apostle *Paul* tells us of some who make a great noise, but know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm (1 *Tim.* 1.7.) they speak they understand not what, and vent what they can give no account of; *Speak what thou knowest.*

Thirdly Note.

We should speak (when called) what we know.

Knowledge is a Talent, and must not be hid in a Napkin; if thou know better then I speak, pray speak, do not hide thy knowledge. As *Elihu* would have *Job* speak in his own case, so he inviteth others to speak about his case, as it followeth in the next verse.

Vers. 34. *Let men of Understanding tell me*, &c.

In this 34th verse *Elihu* turns his speech to *Job*'s friends again, presuming of, or not questioning their consent to what he had said, being confident that himself was in the right, and that they were wise enough to apprehend it. He was perswaded that all wise men either were, or (upon hearing the matter) would be of his minde, and that therefore what *Job* had spoken, was very

very defective of wisdome, as he concludes in the thirty-fifth verse.

Let men of understanding tell me, &c.

He appeales to *Jobs* friends, or any other *men of understanding*: let them (saith he) Consider what I and he have spoken, and give their judgement impartially concerning the whole matter in debate between him and *Job*. *Let men of understanding tell me*, &c.

Viri cordis. i.e. *cordati; cor notat sapientiam et carere cor dicitur qui descipit.*

The Hebrew is, *men of heart*: the heart is the seat of understanding, according to Scripture language, there we read of a wise heart, and of an understanding heart; and it saith of a foolish or indiscreete person, *he hath no heart*; he is a man without a heart. *Ephraim is a silly dove without a heart* (Hos: 7. 11.) that is, he doth not understand. Mr *Broughton* translates; *Sad men of heart will speake as I, and the wise person that heares me.* As in the former part of the verse *Elihu* called for speakers; so in the latter he calleth for hearers; *Let men of understanding tell me*,

Cum Jobo non putat amplius producendum esse colloquium. Quare viros vocat intelligentes. Sanct. *Et vir sapiens audit.* i.e. *audiet me, et mihi acquiescet in hoc.* Merc:

And let a wise man hearken to me; or as some render, *a wise man will hearken to me.*

The word rendred *hearken*, signifies more then to heare, even to submit, to obey, a wise man will hearken to me; that is, he will assent to, and consent with me, he will vote with me, and declare himselfe to be of my mind. In that *Elihu* appealed to wise and understanding men.

Note, First.

It is not good to stand to our owne Judgements altogether, in dealing with the Consciences of others.

Let wise men, let men of understanding, heare and consider the matter, let them speake their minds; we should not leane to nor rely upon our owne understanding in the things which concerne our selves only, much lesse in those, wherein others are concerned more then our selves. *Eyes see more then an eye.* And though it be an argument of too much weakness to see with other mens eyes; yet it is an argument of much goodness and humility, to call in the helpe of other mens eyes.

 Se-

Secondly, Note.

The more wiſe men agree in any matter, the greater is the Conviction.

One man may ſpeak to Conviction, but if many ſpeak the ſame, it is a very ſtrong Conviction. Many (I confeſſe) may center and agree in a wrong Judgement; yet we ought to have a reverend eſteeme of, and not eaſily differ from that Judgement wherein many wiſe and underſtanding men agree. Chriſt ſpeaking of Church-proceedings and cenſures, ſaith (*Math:* 18. 19.) *If two of you* (who conſtitute the leaſt number, much more if a greater number of godly wiſe men) *ſhall agree on earth as touching any thing that they ſhall aske, it ſhall be done for them*, &c. So ſtill the more wiſe, holy, and learned men agree in any poynt, the greater is our conviction, and the ſtronger our obligation to ſubmit to it. He that doth not heare a ſingle brother, his fault is great; much more if he heare not two or three; moſt of all when he doth not heare the Church ſpeaking to him, and teſtifying againſt him in the name of Jeſus Chriſt.

Thirdly, *Elihu* having made a long diſcourſe, appeal's to wiſe men.

Hence note.

He that believeth he hath ſpoken truth, is not afraid to have it conſidered by thoſe who are beſt able to judge what is true.

Truth feares not any teſt, or tryall. He that offers pure gold and ſilver, cares not who toucheth it, or takes the Aſſay. *Wiſdome is* (ſure enough to be) *juſtified of her children.* They who underſtand truth, and love it, can doe nothing againſt the truth, but for it.

Fourthly, *Elihu* having diſcourſed long, is willing to referre it to men, and to let them judge of it.

Hence note.

He that hath ſpoken truth in his uprightneſs, hath reaſon to believe that he ſhall have the Conſent of the upright with him.

There is a ſameneſſe of ſpirit in all wiſe and godly men for the maine, and for the moſt part it is ſo in particulars. If a godly man conſcienciouſly judge ſuch an opinion to be truth, he may be much aſſured, that other wiſe and godly men will be of his opinion too. He

He dares ſay, as *Elihu*, *Let wiſe men hearken unto me.*

Fifthly, and laſtly, In that *Elihu* makes his appeal to wiſe men, to men of heart.

Note.

All men are not fit to give their Judgement in a caſe.

All are not Competent Judges, nor prepared to give an opinion; and if they doe 'tis not much to be regarded; wiſe men, ſpecially godly wiſe men, men of a holy underſtanding, are the men whoſe judgement and opinion is to be regarded. *Elihu* having beſpoken the thoughts and opinion of wiſe men, ſeemes to give his owne in the next words.

Verſ. 35. *Job hath ſpoken without knowledge, and his words were without wiſdome.*

When *Elihu* had offered it to the Conſideration of wiſe and underſtanding men, whether *Job* had ſpoken right about that great poynt, *Submiſſion to the abſolute Soveraignty of God*, he forbare not firſt, and plainly to declare his owne underſtanding of it.

Job hath ſpoken without knowledge.

The Hebrew is, *not in knowledge*, or, *not knowingly*; that is, ignorantly, fooliſhly; a very high charge; *Job hath ſpoken without knowledge*; yet we are not to underſtand it as if *Elihu* thought *Job* an Ignorant, or an unknowing man, he could not but know otherwiſe; but as to this particular caſe, he reports him as a man that had ſpoken without knowledge, and declared himſelfe both beſide his duty, and the rule.

Hence note.

They who are very wiſe and knowing in many things, yet may be out in ſome.

The beſt of men are not perfect, either in grace, or knowledge. We may know much, and yet come ſhort in what we ought to know; A man may ſpeak ſome things very underſtandingly, and yet ſpeak other things very erroneouſly; A *Job* may be out ſometimes. *Job hath ſpoken without knowledge.*

And

And his words were without wisdome.

When the Lord comes to decide this great Controversie in the last Chapter of this Book, he tells *Job's* three friends, that their words had not been right, as the words of *Job*; and yet here *Elihu* saith, *Job's words were without wisdome*, or, *not in wisdome*. When God said, the words of *Job* were right; we may understand it, that they were so according to their general tenour, or they were so comparatively to what his friends, *Eliphaz*, *Zophar*, and *Bildad* had said in his case, or at least his last words (after God had throughly convinced and humbled him) were so, though in many things he had fayled in speech, or spoken those things which were not right before. Yet here *Elihu* spake truth, while he sayd, *his words were without wisdome* in the speciall poynt he had to doe with him about; and so much *Job* himselfe acknowledged, *I have spoken once, yea twice, but I will speak no more*; I will no more set my wisdome against the wisdome of God, nor presume to have things goe according to my mind, let God doe what he will with me hereafter.

Consider, how well this good man tooke the plain-dealing of *Elihu*; It might be expected that *Job* would quickly have risen up in passion, especially when he heard himselfe thus urged; But being convinced, with what *Elihu* spake, he gave him not a word, much lesse an angry word.

Hence note.

A good man where he is faulty, will heare reproofe with patience.

A gracious heart, will soone be angry with himselfe for speaking or doing amisse, but he can take it well to heare himselfe reproved, when he hath indeed either spoken or done amisse. Nor are there many greater and clearer arguments of a gracious heart then this. To beare a reproofe wel is a high point of commendation. Grace may be shewed as eminently by our patience when we are rebuked for doing that which is evill, as by our forwardnes and zeale in doing that which is good. When *Nathan* the Prophet applyed the parable home to *David* after he had not only committed but continued long impenitently in his grievous sins of adultery and murder, telling him to his face, *Thou art the man* (2 Sam: 12. 7.) and not only telling him so, but at once upbrayding him with all the former benefits and kindnesses of God to him, & threatning him with many dreadfull future judgements (*v.* 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.) when (I say) he was thus sharply dealt with, it might have been feared, that this Great king would have risen up in passion, and roared like a fierce Lyon upon the Prophet; yet we heare nothing from him but words of sorrowfull confession, and humble submission (*v.* 13.) *I have sinned against the Lord.* The boldnesse of *Paul* was great in blaming *Peter* openly, and *Peters* meeknesse was as great in bearing that blame (*Gal:* 2.14.) Nor doe I know whether the patience of *Job* were greater in bearing the great afflictions that God layd upon him, or in bearing the great reproofs which this man layd upon him. I grant, he complained often of those bitter reproaches which his three friends cast upon him, charging him for a wicked man or a hypocrite, and then he replyed and replyed home: but here *Elihu* reproved him sharply for his rash speeches and intemperate carriage under his affliction, and he tooke it both meekly and silently. A good man will not storme, nor rage, nor revile, nor threaten, when he is justly reprehended, but lyes downe under it, and takes it quietly, yea thankfully, and goes home and blesseth God that he hath met with a knock; These are very hard words, *Thou hast spoken words without wisdome*; But *Job* seemes to confesse and patiently beare them: *It is best for us not to doe or speak any thing that deserves a reproofe: and 'tis the next best, to receive a reproofe well for what we have either done or spoken ill.*

JOB,

JOB. Chap. 34. Vers. 36, 37.

My desire is that Job may be tryed unto the end, because of his answers for wicked men.

For he addeth rebellion unto his sin, he clappeth his hands amongst us, and multiplyeth his words against God.

IN these two verses *Elihu* windes up his second speech to *Job*, and in them we have two things considerable; First, his motion made in reference to *Job* at the beginning of the 36th verse; *My desire is (or this is the thing that I move for) that Job may be tryed unto the end.* Secondly, we have the reason of this motion, which some make three-fold, others foure-fold, taking the latter part of the 36th verse for one of the foure; *My desire is that Job may be tryed to the end*, why?

First, Because *of his answers for wicked men.*

Secondly, *I desire he may be tryed unto the end*, why? *for he addeth rebellion unto his sin.*

Thirdly, *I desire he may be tryed unto the end?* why? *he clappeth his hands amongst us*, and

Fourthly, *I desire he may be tryed to the end*, why? *he multiplyeth his words against God.* Others take the latter words of the 36th verse, only as the subject matter about which *Elihu* desires *Job* may be tryed, that is, concerning his answers for wicked men. And so the 37th verse containes three reasons why he desires he may be brought to that tryall.

Vers. 36. *My desire is that Job may be tryed.*

So we translate, and we put in the margin, *O my father*, most or many translaters put that into the text, *O my father, Let Job be tryed unto the end.* The first word of the text hath a two-fold signification; some taking it as an application to God by the name or title *father*. The reason of this difference is, because the roote of that Hebrew word which signifies a *father*, signifies to *desire*, to *will or wish*. Mr *Broughton* renders, *O my father* (and he adds,

אבה *voluit cupiit, unde* אב *pater, qui est benevolus dictus. Pater mi proferetur Job usq; ad victoriam.* Jun:

O

O my father which art in heaven) Let Job be tryed unto victory. As if *Elihu* (saith he) looking up to heaven, by *O father*, meant what followeth, *O father which art in heaven.* And he quotes *Abraham Peritzol* (a learned Rabbin) expounding the words so translated, at larg.

Father is one of the sweetest and most honourable compellations of God. (*Isa:* 63.16.) the whole Church of the *Jewes* is brought in bespeaking God in that Relation; *Thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us*, &c. And God speaking of himselfe, saith (*Mal:* 1.6.) *A son honoureth his father, if I be a father, where is my honour.* It was usuall even among the heathens to adde the name *father* to their Idol gods, thereby to expresse their reverence, or veneration of them.

Apud Gentiles pater commune nomen erat Deorum; unde Diespiter, Marspiter, Jupiter.

O my father.

They who embrace this translation take speciall notice of that pronoune *My, O my father.* He doth not say only or barely, *O father*, but *O my father.* Those appropriating possessive pronouns, *mine, thine*, have a kinde of deliciousnesse in them, and breath aboundance of affection. *Luther* sayd the sweetnesse of the Gospel lyeth in *pronounes*; when a believer can say (with believing *Thomas*) *My Lord, and my God.* Those things or persons which we love most we call ours; we say of a single speciall friend, *he is mine*; and to say, such a one is mine; is as much as to say, he is much beloved, much prized or esteemed by me, he, as it were, lies next my heart; property rayseth the price of all good things. We rejoyce in God most, when we can call him ours; and so doth God in us, when he takes us for his owne. We have a meeting or union of severall possessive pronouns in one verse (*Cant:* 8.12.) *My vineyard which is mine is before me: My, mine, before me*; implying how much Jesus Christ did appropriate the Church unto himselfe, or how much he thought himselfe concerned in the prosperity of the Church. And as the Title *Father* is sweet and comfortable, so glorious and honourable; God is the father of all, and all fatherhood is derived from God. That of the Apostle (*Eph:* 3.15.) which we translate, *of whom the whole family*, &c. Others render, *the whole fatherhood, in heaven and earth is named.* For as God only is good, and other things are good only by communication from him, so God only is a father, and all other fatherhood

ἐξ ὃ πασα πατρια. *Ex quo omnis paternitas.* Vulg: *Paternitatis nomen ex semetipso largitur omnibus; sicut enim solus bonus dicitur quia bonitatem aliis communicat*, &c. Hieron: in Epist: ad Ephes: cap: 3.

hood is by derivation and communication from him. *O my father, let Job be tryed unto the end.* We say,

My desire is.

The Hebrew text is as cleare for that; and whether we say, *O my father, let Job be tryed*, or, *my desire is that Job may be tryed to the end*, the general sense is the same. We render the word by *desire* (Chap: 9. 26.) where *Job* tells us, that his life or the life of man is like *the swift ships*; we put in the margin, *ships of desire* (it is this word) that is, like those ships which being most desirable (as being laden with the richest and most precious commodities) make most hast home to their harbour, or proper Port. Thus here, *My desire*, or the thing that I strongly wish is, *&c.* The Chaldee paraphrase renders, *My will is, or I will*

That Job may be tryed.

Volo ego ut probetur Job, &c. Targ:

But had not *Job* been tryed already? was there any need to call him to a farther tryall? had he not been in the furnace a long time? why then doth *Elihu* so earnestly importune that *Job* might be brought to tryall?

I answer; The word signifies a two-fold tryall; First, a tryall by way of examination, or argumentation; we try a man when we examine him, and argue with him, when we scann and search out what he hath spoken, or what he hath done. In this sence the word is used (*Chap:* 12. 11.) and at the 3d verse of this Chapter, *the eare tryeth words*; that is, the eare examineth the sense and meaning of those things which are spoken; and by the eare, he meanes not only the sensitive faculty taken abstractly, but the sensitive faculty joyned with the intellectuall. A beast hath an eare and can heare, but a beast cannot try or examine that which is spoken and heard; only they that have rationall faculties joyned with the sensitive are able to try words, and matter delivered by them. *I desire Job may be tryed to the utmost*, that the words and speeches which have past from him, may be fully considered, or considered to the end, that it may, at last, appeare what he hath asserted and maintained.

Sunt qui intelligunt probari *pro* exagitari *disputatione,*

Secondly, It signifies a tryall by affliction (*Zech:* 13. 9.) *One third shall be brought through the fire and tryed.* As metrall gold or silver is tryed and refined in the fire, so shall they in the fire

fire of affliction. Jesus Christ is called *a tryed stone* (Isa: 28. 16.) and he was so in both these accounts; he was examined and argued with to the end, and he was afflicted, and grieved to the end, he was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs all his dayes; *Behold I lay in Zion a tryed stone, a sure Corner stone*; that which is tryed is sure; we may trust that which hath been tryed. We say, *try me and trust me*; we may understand *Elihu* in both, or in either of these senses. My desire is that *Job* may be tryed, that what he hath sayd may be further examined, or that his affliction may be continued, till he be brought to a sight of his errors and mistakes. I would have him corrected till he submits to God as a conqueror, and recanteth his rash and inconsiderate answers. *My desire is that Job may be tryed*

sed præstat ut ad tentationem referatur per afflictiones. Merc:

Optatū ut tantisper flagelletur Job donec deo vincenti cedat et responsis vanis renunciet. Jun:

Unto the end.

He doth not say barely, *tryed*, but, *tryed unto the end*; that is, *fully* and *throughly* tryed, not by halves, overley and slightly; If he be indeed just and sincere, the fire of this tryall, how long soever he continueth in it, will doe him no hurt, it will only purge and refine him from his remaining drosse; but if he be unsound and nought, he will evaporate and fume away into vaine complaints and murmurings; Therefore *let him be tryed to the end.*

עד רצח *verbum* נצח *significat instare et urgere opus donec ad finem perductum fuerit.*

Some of the Latines translate, *I would have him tryed to death*, which is the end or period of man in this world. The word signifies *sempeternity*, as also *victory*, because that which continueth ever, must needs be victorious (1 *Sam:* 15. 29.) *The strength of Israel will not lie*; we put in the Margin, *The eternity or victory of Israel* (that is, the eternall God, who is victor over all) *will not lie.* Thus some render here, *I desire Job may be tryed unto victory*, that is, that God would never give over trying him, till he hath overcome him and brought downe his spirit, for still the man is too high, too stout, his spirit is still too big, too unbroken; my desire therefore is that God would try him to victory, till he hath brought him upon his knees, and made him eate his words, or till he give glory to God by humbling himselfe and confessing his sin; I would have him fully convinced by argument and throughly humbled by chastisement, till he at last resigneth up himselfe to the will of God. The *Italian* glosse puts it in the forme of a prayer; *Withdraw not thy visitation from Job, untill thou hast brought him*

Plerisq; latini, ad mortem usque *reddunt quod in Originali habetur,* usq; in sæculum vel in sempiternum. *Vatablus* longo Tempore; *Gregorius*, Ad huc. *Philippus* Jugiter.

him to the duty of a child; Further, this word, *unto the end*, doth not imply a desire of the everlastingness of his tryall, but of the profitableness of it. He would not have him alwayes kept upon the rack, or under the rod, but he would have him effectually dealt with, that the matter might issue wel with him.

From the words thus opened, note first.

Affliction is a tryall.

It makes us appeare what we are; most have but an appearance till they are tryed; and being tryed, what they are doth really appeare. Afflictions try our graces what they are; and afflictions try our corruptions what they are. Afflictions draw forth the spirit of a man, they turne his inside outward, and set him (as it were) in the open light. Take tryall in the second sence by way of examination, and it yeilds us the same truth. He that is throughly sifted will appeare in his own likeness. Let a man be fully dealt and argued with, let his speeches and his actions be brought to the rule of the word, what he is, and what they are, will soone be seene. That's the tryall which the Apostle means (1 *Thes:* 5. 2.) *Prove all things*; prove what men say and hold, prove their assertions and opinions, and you shall come to a cleare understanding of them. The rule of the word is a straight or right rule, and that which is right will shew you both it self, and that which is crooked, or any way swerving and departing from it.

Rectum est index sui et obliqui.

Secondly, As tryall is taken in the former notion for affliction, *My desire is that Job may be tryed unto the end.*

Note.

It is lawfull to pray or wish for afflictions upon others in some cases.

We may pray for and wish afflictions upon others for their good, or for the glory of God. It is not good to wish evill as evill upon any man, no not upon the worst of men. *Job* professed against that (*Chap:* 31. 29, 30.) *If I have rejoyced at the destruction of him that hated me, or have suffered my mouth to sin by wishing a curse to his soule, then* &c. As if he had sayd, If I have prayed or wished that any evill might befall mine enemy as evill, I should have done very ill, and deserved to suffer ill. For that had been an evill wish. Yet, as we our selves ought to chuse affliction rather

rather then sin; so we may pray for affliction upon others, rather then that they should goe on in sin. As in that case of the Churches proceeding to the sentence of excommunication; which is the delivering of a person up to Satan, or a putting him into the very power of the devill for a time (1 *Cor:* 5. 4, 5.) it is the end or designe which makes this lawfull: our business in the ministry and in all Church-administrations, is to put soules out of the power of Satan, to rescue them out of the hand of the devill, to recover those that are led Captive by him at his will; yet saith the Apostle, *Deliver such a one unto Satan*, put him into the devills hands, for what end? *For the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.* This makes the prayer or act of the Church lawfull, because the intendment is the destroying of that which ought to be destroyed, or to destroy that in man which will be the destruction of man, *his flesh*, his lust, his pride, his covetousnesse, his wantonness; *For the destruction of this flesh deliver him to Satan, that the Spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.* Thus we may pray and wish for affliction upon others; but 'tis a prayer which must be managed with a great deale of caution, lest our prayers to God in that kinde, be found ill wishes to men. That which *Elihu* had in his thoughts, when he desired *Job* might be tryed to the very end, was, that he might be prevented from going on in the way wherein he was to the end. Yea, I conceive a man may pray for afflictions upon himselfe, rather then he should goe on in a course of sin, or, when he findes that other wayes and means which God hath used with him, have not been effectuall to subdue his corrupt heart, to mortifie his lusts, and to bring him off from a course of sin, but that (as it is sayd in the next verse) he is in danger of *adding rebellion to his sin.* A godly man had much rather that God should make him poore, sicke, weake, and nothing in this world, then let his corruptions have dominion over him; He desires rather God should take the world quite out of his hand, then that the world should get into his heart, or be as fuel to feed and enflame his lusts.

Thus *Elihu* desired that *Job* might be tryed, because tryalls by affliction are for our purging, refining, and bettering. Love was the roote of this wish, not hatred or ill will. *Let Job be tryed to the end.* Why? we may take the latter part of the verse for a reason why, as wel as for the matter about which he would have him tryed.

Bono ipsius optat hoc, non odio aut malevolentia. Drus:

Because.

Becauſe of his anſwers for wicked men.

Propter reſponſiones (communes) cum hominibus improbis. Bez: *Tanquam unus è numero virorum vanorum.* Piſc:

Let him be tryed concerning thoſe words which he hath ſpoken in common with or after the manner of vaine men. He hath ſpoken words wherein he ſeemes to comply with wicked men, to ſay as they ſay, to conſent with them, and to be of their opinion, this was charged upon him directly by *Elihu* at the 8th verſe of this Chapter; *What man is like Job, who drinketh up ſcorning like water, which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men*; that is, though *Job* in his converſation or carriage of his life hath not, yet in this diſcourſe, he hath ſtrengthened the hands of wicked men, or confirmed them in their opinion, ſpeaking ſo much of the heavy preſſures of God upon him, and deſiring ſo often to come to a hearing, as if he had ſome wrong done him. We are not to underſtand theſe words of *Elihu*, *Becauſe of his anſwers for wicked men*; As if he charged *Job* to doe ſo directly, or as if he had formally taken upon him to plead or advocate the cauſe of wicked men; we are not (I ſay) to underſtand him ſo groſsly, nor had it been true to ſay, that *Job* opened his mouth, or ſpake thus for wicked men; but his meaning is, he hath ſpoken ſuch things as in common apprehenſion ſeeme to comply with the opinions of wicked men; or with the ſpeeches which they uſe when they are (like him) in a troubled condition.

Or againe, *Becauſe of his anſwers for wicked men*; that is, that he may acknowledge the anſwers he hath given, are not ſuch as doe become a godly man, but rather ſavour of ſuch a ſpirit as unbroken proud perſons hold forth in the time of their affliction; who are never pleaſed with, but alwayes complaining at divine diſpenſations.

Laſtly, Theſe words, *Becauſe of his anſwers for wicked men*, may, poſſibly, have this ſence; Becauſe he hath ſpoken ſuch things as may ſerve the turne of wicked men for anſwers, or, as if he would inſtruct them what to anſwer, when at any time they are under the hand of God. He may be ſayd to anſwer for another man, who any way prompts him how or what to anſwer. And while a good man ſpeakes amiſſe, in any caſe, he teacheth, yea and encourageth bad men to ſpeake ſo too. Yet I rather incline to the firſt interpretation, that *Elihu* would have *Job* tryed, becauſe his anſwers were ſuch as it might be judged he had taken wicked men for his patterne in giving them, and not as if in them he had given a patterne to wicked men.

Hence note.

First, *A good man may ſometimes act the part of a wicked man, or he may ſpeak like wicked men, as if he were one of them.*

Though his ſtate be as different from the ſtate of wicked men, as light is from darkneſſe, or as ſweet from ſoure, or white from black, yet as to ſome actions or ſpeeches, he may beare a reſemblance to them. Good men and bad men doe, as I may ſay, enter-common in many things; a wicked man whoſe heart is nought, who is yet in an unregenerate eſtate (for I meane not by a wicked man, him only that is flagitious, a murderer, a whoremonger, a drunkard, but a wicked man is any one that is unregenerate, whoſe heart is not yet changed; Now I ſay, a wicked man) may ſpeak and doe many things like a godly man; he may heare the word, and pray, and performe outward duties, which are like and are (take them materially) the ſame which godly men performe. Thus he enter-commons with godly men; and this is the caſe of all hypocrites, who make a pretence of religion, when they have no acquaintance with the power of it. And thus through temptation, and in ſome very burthenſome afflictions a godly man may ſpeak as a wicked man; ſuch haſty raſh provoking ſpeeches may paſſe from him as proceed from the ungodly, only here is the difference, thoſe evill ſpeeches or actions proceed from the ſtate of the one, and only from the temptation of the other.

Secondly; From the phraſe or forme of ſpeech, in which the originall expreſſeth wicked men; The words are, *Men of wickedneſs, or iniquity*; As if it had been ſayd, the worſt of wicked men. This ſhews us what man naturally is; *he is a man of wickedneſs*; nothing but wickedneſs, altogether wicked. The Lord looking downe from heaven upon all the children of men (in a ſtate of nature) ſayd, *There is not one that doth good, no not one.* Take any wicked man he hath no good in him, no not one good thought in him; he is a man of Iniquity, he is meere wickedneſs, till he be changed, till his heart be broken by Godly ſorrow, till he be united unto Chriſt by faith, and through the Spirit. I know this expreſſion is uſed ſeverall times in Scripture, to note thoſe men who are ſinners of the firſt forme, being not only ſinners in their

their ſtate, but in the higheſt degree of activity. Thus Antichriſt is called, *The man of ſin* (2 Theſ: 2.) And when the Prophet ſaith (*Iſa:* 55. 7.) *Let the man of iniquity turne from his evill way*; he meanes the worſt of men. Yet this is a truth, every man in an unconverted eſtate *is a man of iniquity*; he hath no goodneſs, nothing of God in him, he bears only the Image and impreſſe of the devill upon him. Chriſt told the Phariſees, who were high in reputation with the world for good men (*John* 8. 44.) *Ye are of your father the devill, and the luſts of your father ye will doe.* The naturall man is ſo ſinfull, that he is meerly ſin. And ſometimes a godly man ſpeakes and doth as if he were ſo too. *Job* ſpake like men *of Iniquity*.

Elihu proceedeth more fully to declare both the reaſon why he would have *Job* further tryed, and likewiſe what he meant by *his anſwers for wicked men.*

Verſ. 37. *For he addeth rebellion (or treſpaſs) to his ſin.*

Nomine חטאה *intelligitur peccatum ex errore commiſſum; Nomine vero* פשע *ſcelus proprie rebellio.*

Here are two words, *ſin* and *rebellion*; the firſt which we render *ſin*, ſignifies ſin in common; the leaſt tranſgreſſion of the Law it is ſin; the leaſt vaine thought of the heart, the leaſt idle word of the tongue is ſin; but every ſin is not rebellion; that hath many ſpeciall markes or brands rather upon it. To rebell is to ſin with a high hand, to rebell is to ſin with a ſtiff neck, to rebell is to ſin with obſtinacy and reſolvedneſs of will; *he addeth rebellion to his ſin.* But did *Job* rebell indeed? I conceive the rebellion which *Elihu* chargeth *Job* with, is not rebellion in a ſtrict but in a qualified and comparative ſenſe; As if he had ſaid; *Job* ſinned before, but now his ſin is heightened, we ſee him now (in words) riſing up againſt God, complaining of his juſtice, or as if he had dealt unjuſtly with him. What he did in the time of his proſperity, thoſe ſlips & falls which he had then, weighed nothing as laid in the ballance with the intemperate ſpeeches which he hath uttered in the day of his trouble. *He addeth rebellion unto his ſin.* So we render as reſpecting what he was and had done before. Others render it potentially not indicatively; *Let Job be tryed unto the end, becauſe of his anſwers for wicked men, for otherwiſe he may adde rebellion to his ſin*; we know not whether his corruptions may carry him if ſuffered to goe onne. This is a more favourable reading of the text,

text, not as a charge of naturall but feared rebellion againſt God; As if he had layd, *I ſee the mans ſpirit is ſo entangled, that if he be not well and wiſely dealt with, poſſibly he may come to adde even rebellion unto his ſin*; and whereas he ſinned before out of ignorance or imprudence, he may ſhortly ſin out of contumacy and perverſeneſs.

Hence Note.

Firſt, *There are ſins of ſeverall degrees.*

Every man ſinneth, he that ſaith he hath no ſin, or doth not ſin, there is no truth in him (1 *John* 1. 8.) But every mans ſin is not rebellion, every man doth not riſe up to that height and degree of ſinning. If any ſhall enquire, when is a mans ſin rebellion? I anſwer.

Firſt, That mans ſin grows to be rebellion, whoſe will is much in it. He that will ſin rebells. The Apoſtle *Paul* ſaith (*Rom:* 7. 19.) *The evill which I would not, that I doe.* This is the caſe of every godly man at his beſt, he doth thoſe evills which he would not; this is not rebellion, becauſe the will of a godly man is changed and turned off from ſin; he can ſay, the evill which I would not doe, that doe I. Rebellion is the doing of that evill which we would.

Secondly, In rebellion, or in rebellious acts of ſin, there is much of the underſtanding as well as of the will; that is, a man ſeeth cleerely what he doth is ſin, or that the rule is againſt him; to rebell is to ſin againſt the light. It is ſayd in the 24th Chapter of this booke, *The wicked are of them that rebell againſt the light*; that is, they cannot abide the light; he means it there of the naturall light; the adulterer and the thiefe cannot indure Sun or day-light: it is much more true of myſticall light, if he hath any light of knowledge, he reſiſts and rebells againſt it. Its great rebellion to reſiſt the receiving of light offered, but 'tis greater rebellion to reſiſt light received; ſins againſt knowledge are rebellious ſins.

Thirdly, A rebellious ſin is a ſin againſt reproofe, admonition and warning; when we have been often told of ſuch a ſin, and admoniſhed of ſuch an evill courſe, and yet we will goe on in it, here is rebellion; ſuch a man hath not only light in his underſtanding, that what he doth is ſinfull, but this light hath been

brought home to him and wrought upon him by reproofe, counſell, and admonition; here is ſtill greater rebellion. Therefore in the proceeding of the Church, ſpoken of (*Math:* 18.) when an offending brother hath been reproved and told of his fault, firſt in private by a particular brother, then by two or three, then by the whole Church; if after all theſe admonitions and reproofes, he doth not repent, he is to be caſt out as a rebel, and accounted as a heathen or a publican.

Laſtly, As 'tis rebellion when we ſin as againſt the reproofes of man, ſo againſt the providences of God; and thoſe of two ſorts.

Firſt, When we ſin againſt the favourable providences of God, I meane thoſe which are outward; when God beſtowes many mercies and comforts upon us, when he gives us health and riches in the world, and fullneſſe of all things, then to ſin againſt him is rebellion. (*Deut:* 32. 15.) *Jeſurun waxed fat and kicked, and rebelled againſt the Lord, and lightly regarded the rock of his ſalvation.* When we have received many and great mercies, then to grow vaine and wanton, and nouriſh our ſelves as in the day of ſlaughter, this is rebellion againſt God.

Secondly, When the providences of God have broken us by this evill or that evill, when we are broken in our eſtates, broken in our names, broken in our relations, broken with ſickneſs after ſickneſs, and yet perſiſt in a ſinfull way, this is rebellion, this is ſin in the very height of it. This was the rebellion of *Ahaz* (2 Chron: 28. 22.) *Who in the time of his diſtreſſe, treſpaſſed yet more againſt the Lord.* And this was the rebellion of *Judah* (Iſa: 1. 5.) *Why ſhould ye be ſtricken any more? ye will revolt more and more.* Take heed of this; 'tis too much that we ſin at all, let us not be found adding rebellion to our ſin. I may ſay theſe two things concerning the habit or any act of ſin.

Firſt, It is a burthen to a Godly man; *O wretched man that I am* (ſayd *Paul*) *who ſhall deliver me from this body of death?*

Secondly, As it is a Godly mans burthen when he ſins, ſo it is his care and ſtudy not to ſin; he would not ſin at all; he watcheth himſelfe that he may not ſin in the leaſt degree. That was the Apoſtle *Johns* deſire and care for all the Churches (1 *John* 2. 1.) *My little children, theſe things I write unto you, that ye ſin not.* I would have you watch over your hearts and wayes ſo narrowly, that

that no ſin might ſlip you; that ye might not have a wrong thought, nor ſpeake an idle word; how much more ſhould we take heed, that we adde not rebellion to our ſin. There is ſomewhat of rebellion in every ſin, even in the ſins of good men; but 'tis ſad when they adde rebellion to their ſin. *Samuel* gives a dreadfull deſcription of that ſin which is rebellion (1 *Sam:* 15. 23.) *Rebellion is as the ſin of witch-craft, and ſtubbornneſs is as Iniquity and Idolatry.* Witch-craft is that ſin wherein men have much converſe and compliance with the devill; The devill and the witch, or the devill and the Diviner (as our Margin hath it) act as loving companions; they have mutual converſe, yea commerſe, they trade together. Rebellion is that ſin, or we ſin rebelliouſly, when we declare our ſelves moſt averſe to God. The witch declares himſelfe a friend to the devill; the rebellious ſoule defieth and deſpiſeth God; now thoſe ſins that have moſt compliance with the devill, and moſt defiance againſt God, are put together; if a man doth much ſet himſelfe to oppoſe God, by ſinning againſt light, againſt reproofes, and againſt providences, whether the gracious or afflicting providences of God (If a man (I ſay) rebell thus againſt God) it is like the ſin of witch-craft, which is compliance and converſe with the devill. Here is an extreame on the one ſide, and an extreame on the other ſide, yet both meete, *rebellion is as the ſin of witch-craft, and ſtubbornneſs is as Iniquity and Idolatry.* Theſe latter words are exegeticall; *ſtubbornneſs* (that is, when a man is ſtout and will goe on his way) *is as Iniquity and Idolatry.* We may conſider a great elegancy in thoſe words; *Stubbornneſs is as Idolatry.* What is Idolatry? it is worſhipping or giving honour to a falſe god, which is indeed worſhipping the devill; all Idolatry is devill-worſhip; the witch worſhippeth the devill intentionally, and ſo doth the Idolater, though he intend it not (1 *Cor:* 10. 20.) *The things which the Gentiles ſacrifice, they ſacrifice to devills and not to God.* I doe not ſay, every error or fayling in worſhip is devill-worſhip, but that which is Idolatry indeed, or the ſetting up of a worſhip of our owne deviſing is Idolatry, and devill-worſhip. Thus ſtubbornneſs is as Idolatry, and rebellion is as witch-craft. What is witch-craft? compliance with the devill. What is Idolatry? devill-worſhip, a falling downe to the devill. Let the wicked conſider what they doe when they rebell: and let the

people of God take heed of any sin, or way of sinning, which may be accounted rebellion. To sin with much will against much light, against many reproofs from men, and against the reproving, or against the inviting providences of God, hath rebellion in it; *He addeth rebellion to his sin.*

Secondly, Taking the words in the mildest sence,

Note.

Sometimes a good man may goe backward, he may be worse and worse, and doe worse and worse.

We should be always growing in grace, that's the condition of believers and their duty, yet under some dispensations they may decline for a time and grow worse and worse, adding that which is like rebellion to their sin.

Thirdly, If we consider these words in connection with the former; *Elihu* having prayed for further tryall upon *Job*, as fearing, that else he might adde rebellion to his sin.

Note.

He that is not throughly convinced and chastned, may quickly grow worse and worse.

He may, or he will adde rebellion to his sin. I doe not know where a mans sin will end, if the Lord should let him alone. 'Tis a mercy that any man, especially that God hath a continuall inspection over us; if some mens wayes were not tryed and questioned, they might adde rebellion to their sin; who knows where they would stop? it is a mercy to have both words and actions examined by brethren and Churches, how sadly else would many wander, yea it is a mercy to be tryed by affliction. When God keeps us from a foule way by building a wall against us, it is a mercy, else we might adde rebellion to sin. No man knowes the measure of his owne evill heart, or what it would doe; for though believers have a generall promise *to be kept by the power of God to salvation*; yet how lamentably have good men fallen, though kept from falling away? *Elihu* aggravates this yet further by the example of *Job* in the latter and last part of the verse.

He clappeth his hands amongst us, and multiplieth his words against God.

He

He clappeth his hands, or, *maketh a noyse amongst us*, as Mr *Broughton* reads it; clapping of the hands in Scripture hath a three-fold signification.

First, It implyeth passion or sorrow. A man under affliction claps or wrings his hands for griefe. Both those gestures are of the same significancy.

Secondly, There is a clapping of the hands with indignation; when we are very angry, then we clap our hands.

Thirdly, There is a clapping of the hands for joy, or in a way of triumph; when a man thinks he has conquered and got the day, he claps his hands, and so doe they who are on his side. (*Psal.* 47. 1.) *O clap your hands (all ye people) shout unto God with the voyce of triumph.* I conceive *Elihu* intends *Job* clapping his hands in this third sense; he clappeth his hands amongst us, or insults over us, as if he had conquered and wonne the Garland; and therefore *Elihu* prayed that he might be further tryed. This is another aggravation of that ill frame which *Elihu* conceived *Job* to be in. And indeed to clap our hands when we have done or spoken evill, is worse then the evill, which we have either done or spoken; *He clappeth his hands*;

Exploſurus eſt nos, ut qui vicisſet nos diſputando. Piſc.

And multiplieth his words (or, *may multiply words*) *against God.*

Solomon saith (*Pro.* 10. 19.) *in the multitude of words there doth not want sin*; that is, there is store of sin in the multitude of words. They that will be speaking much, slip much. *Job* (saith he) *multiplyeth words against God.* There is a multiplying of words against God two wayes; First, directly; Secondly, by way of reflection or rebound; *Elihu* could not say, *Job* had spoken, nor could he presume he would speak one word, much lesse multiply words against God directly. He knew *Job* was a godly man, but he asserts he had, or feared he might multiply words against God reflectively, that is, speak such words as might cast dishonour upon God, such words as God might take very ill at his hands, and interpret as spoken against himselfe.

Hence note.

They who speake unduely of the waves and proceedings of God with them in this world, speake against God himselfe.

The

The business of *Elihu* in all this discourse, was to hold forth the evill frame of *Jobs* heart, signified by the intemperance of his language under the dealings of God. God had afflicted and chastned *Job*, he had multiplyed wounds upon him, and *Job* in the heate of his spirit and bitternes of his soule, making many complaints about the workings of God with him, is charged with multiplying words against God. We may speak against God before we are aware; yea we may speake many words against God when we thinke we have not spoke one word against him. While we speake impatiently of the proceedings of God in the world, and murmur at his dispensations to our families or persons, what doe we but multiply words against God? we speake much for our selves to God, yea (I may say) we highly commend our selves to God when we submit to his doings, and say nothing, but in a silent admiration adore his dealings, and waite for a good issue of them. *Aaron* proclaimed both his humility and his faith *in holding his peace*, when the Lord slew his two sons *Nadab* and *Abihu*, strangely with fire, for offering strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not (*Lev.* 10. 1, 2, 3.) But how many are there who proclaime their pride and unbelieve, by not being able to hold their peace under the afflicting hand of God, when his hand scarce toucheth them, or when he doth but lay the weight of his little finger upon them, in comparison of that heavy stroake which fell upon *Aaron*. We are in much danger of sinning, when at any time we speake many words, or (as *Elihu* speaketh) multiply words, he is a rare man that speaketh many words, and but some amiss, Now, if to multiply words at any time (even when we are most composed) expoeth us to error in our words, how much more when our tongues utter many words in the bitternes and discomposure of our spirits? And as to speak amisse in any matter is to sin against God, so to speak much amisse of our sufferings, or of the severest providences of God towards us, is to speak much, or to multiply words (though not intentionally) yet really and indeed against God. O then forbeare this multiplication of words, lest you multiply sins. Speak but little, unlesse in the praise of God; take heed how you speak of what God is doing to others, or doing to your selves. Let your words be few, and let them be weighed, for God will weigh your words; and you may heare from him in blowes, what he heareth from you in

in words. 'Tis a dangerous thing to be found speaking words against God; yet this may be the case of a good man, whose heart is with God, and whose heart is for God: even while he hath a general bent of heart to lay himselfe out in speaking and doing for God, he through passion and temptation may be found speaking against God. What we speake discontentedly of the wayes or works of God, is a multiplying of words against God himselfe.

Thus I have given out and finished my thoughts upon the Preface which *Elihu* made to lead in his discourse with *Job*, as also upon two stages of his discourse with him. *Job* sits silent and answers him not a word, which *Elihu* perceiving takes liberty to urge him further with two distinct discourses more, contained in the three Chapters following; which, if the Lord give life and leave, may be opened and offered to the readers use and acceptance in convenient season.

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A TABLE

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2.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5.	124.
2.	9.	80.
2.	10.	712.
2.	12.	147.
4.	12.	811.
5.	15.	398.
	I *Peter.*	
1.	12.	408.
1.	18.	598.
3.	6.	220.
3.	19, 20.	740.
4.	11.	159.
4.	17.	94.
	II *Peter.*	
1.	9.	441.
1.	18, 19.	266.
3.	16.	9.
	I *John.*	
1.	9.	556.
2.	19.	155.
2.	27.	821.
3.	7.	4.
5.	16.	815.
	Jude.	
0.	6.	317.
0.	15.	197, 81.
	Revelation.	
2.	9.	155.
3.	9.	155.
10.	8.	378.
11.	3.	270.
14.	13.	560.
15.	4.	695.
21.	17.	183.

ERRATA.

PAge 14 line 27. *for Hiſtory*, read *Hiſtorian.* p. 145. l. 22. *for words*, r. *word.* p. 236. l. 11. *for inſeparable*, r. *inſuperable.* p. 238. l. 13. *for hath*, r. *had.* p. 328. l. 23. ſupple, *Chriſt*, p. 338. l. 8. *for epethite*, r. *epithete.* p. 339. l. 24. dele, *and.* p. 239. l. 26. *for*, *to*, r. *being.* p. 355. l. 38. *for* 61. r. 11. p. 390. l. 9. for *in*, r. *to.* p. 392. l. 30. for, *yet more*, r. *Thus.* p. 409. in the Margin, for *Cato* r. *Calvin.* p. 511 l. 14. dele, *yea.* p. 639. l. 9 for 2. r. 12. p. 652. l. 30. *for* 58. r. 52. p. 709. l. 23. *for God*, r. *good.* p. 787. l. 39. for, *yet a*, r. *but.*

FINIS.